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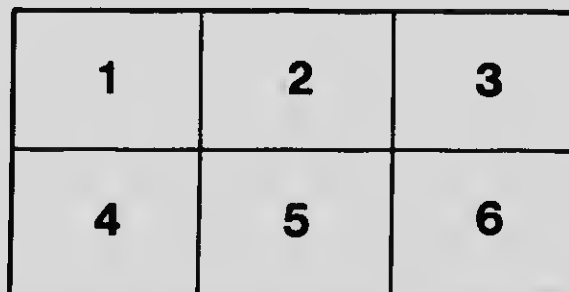
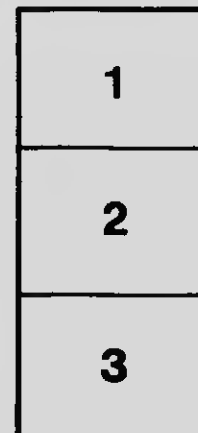
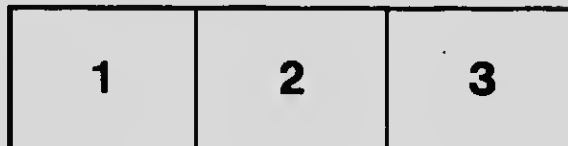
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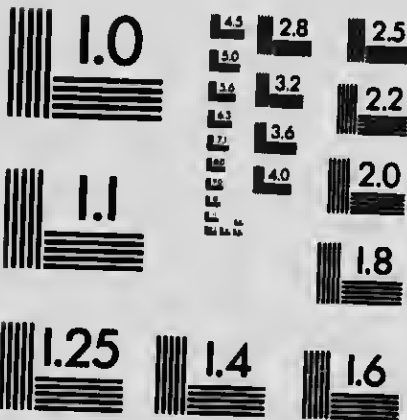
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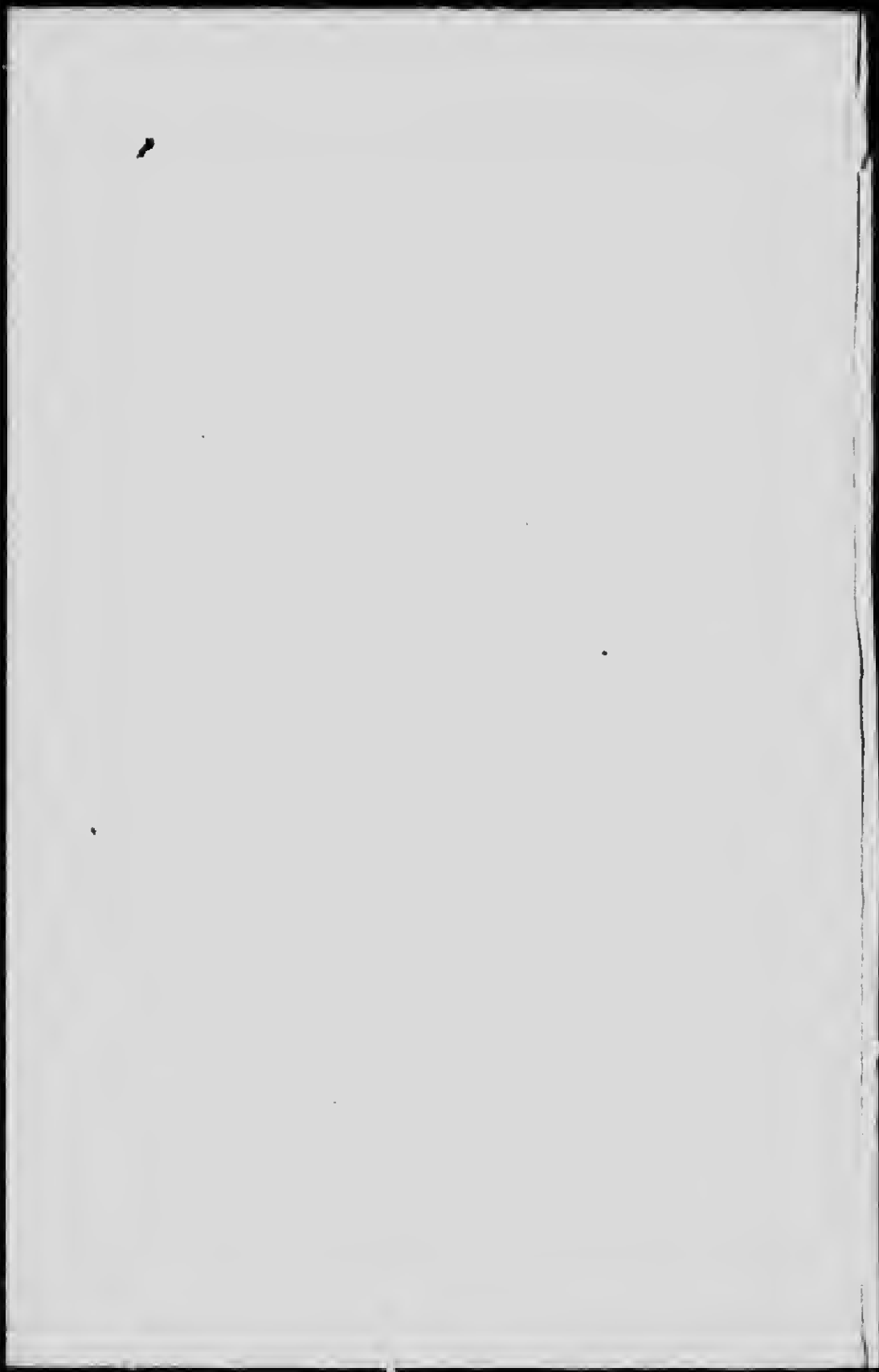
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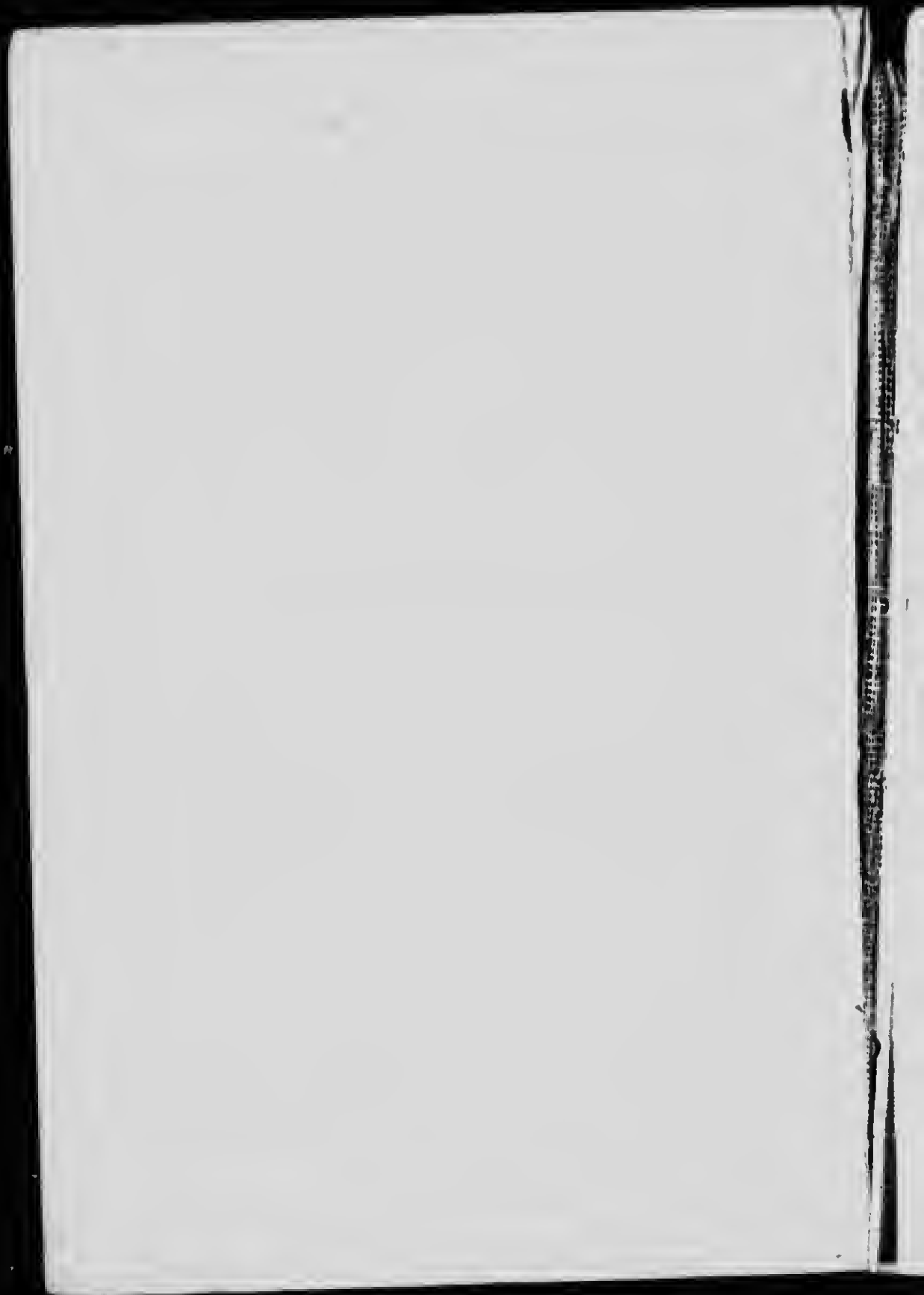
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CANDLELIGHT DAYS



CANDLELIGHT DAYS,

F. J.
S. J.
T. J.

BY

ADELINE M. TESKEY

Author of "The Yellow Pearl," "The Village Artist,"
"Where the Sugar Maple Grows,"
etc. etc.

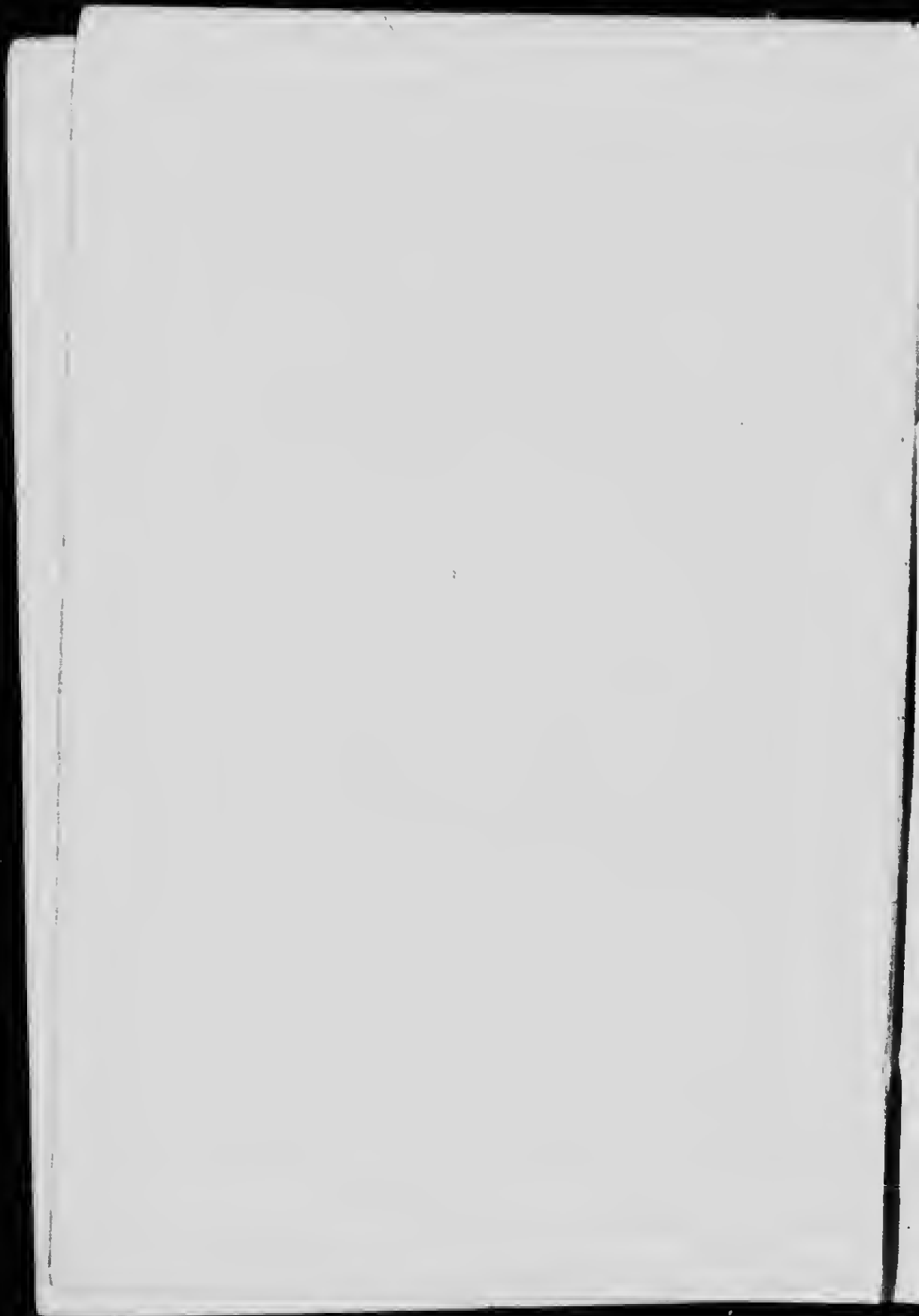
"So bright, so fresh, the days that are no more."—TENNYSON

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE material of this story is largely history. The incidents of pioneer life are the reminiscences of aged friends. Among those friends I will mention the name of the Rev. John May, M.A., of Franktown, Ontario, who kindly permitted me to use data of his own collection. Some of the experiences I have given to characters are *his* experiences, and some of the thoughts and words are his thoughts and words. I gratefully acknowledge all he has done in assisting me with this story.

Other friends whom I would like to thank have passed on to the Great Beyond.



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CANDLELIGHT DAYS

CHAPTER I

STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND

IT was the reports about the generous grants of land given by the Crown to new settlers that induced my father, Thaddeus Thornton, to sell out his interests in the Old Country and cross the ocean along with my mother and me, "little Peter Paul," for the purpose of founding a home in the beautiful wilderness of Canada, "where the trees of prodigious size grow; trunks straight as arrows, without knots, and almost without branches, save at their very tops, growing with the lustiness of centuries upon them," as father read to mother and me from some volume describing the country.

"Fortunately we have reached the continent in the time of peace," said my father, shortly after we had touched the shore. "It is but a short time since this part of it was

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distracted with war. The people now seem to have settled down, and are more desirous to cut down their forests and cultivate their fields than fight."

We travelled by canoe up the St. Lawrence from Quebec, where we had landed, then kept close to the borders of Lake Ontario as far as it would carry us. When we left the water my father bought two horses, and we rode horseback, directing our course toward the Niagara Peninsula, father having in mind the great Falls, about which the whole world had heard.

"It is all done for Peter Paul; the new country offers a broader field for him to carve his way," said my father, as if he felt it necessary to make an excuse to himself and others for venturing into this untried world. "When we are done with it, he shall come into our estate."

Mother and I rode one horse, I sometimes sitting behind her, and when my small legs grew tired of their stretch across the horse, I was lifted into the pannier. A second horse carried our baggage, while father walked, leading by a chain a dog he had purchased along with the horses.

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"I'll have to lead him until he becomes acquainted with us, and knows that we are his peculiar charge," said father, patting the head of the powerful young bull-dog, to which he had given the name "Clinch."

No one could understand Clinch without seeing him; his nose was almost as broad as the top of his head, one half of it being pink, and the other half black, giving him what father called a "sinister" appearance. I did not fully understand the meaning of father's word, but to me Clinch had the appearance which would incline one to be willing to let him have his own way without question.

Although I was small enough to be carried in a pannier, balanced on the right side of my mother's saddle as we journeyed, I was intelligent enough to take in the interesting events of that horseback journey.

"He is a curious, uncanny little child," I overheard my mother say once to my father. "Sometimes I am afraid he will not live to grow up. If you only heard the questions he asks, and the wise observations he makes along the way, you might take him for some-

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one five times his age. His large words are really amusing at times."

"That comes," said my father, "from the fact that he has always associated with grown people. He has scarcely ever heard the talk of children."

We travelled by the trail made by the Indians, which was the only beaten path in many places through the unsettled forest, and even at that early age the love of Nature, which I inherited from my mother, began to show itself, and I listened and looked with quiet joy when she talked about the rich greenness of the foliage, the great moss-embroidered tree-trunks, the slender grace of the white birch, and the sturdy strength of the oak. Winding slowly in and out among the great trees in the dim light caused by the heavily-leaved, overarching branches, was mystery enough to keep a small boy wide awake.

Shy deer looked wonderingly at us before they bounded away. The wild boar tossed his tusked snout and snorted out of our path. Wild cats hissed and spat at us before they fled; blood-curdling shrieks of the hyena or

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lynx sometimes sounded perilously near, and snakes frequently wriggled their wiry way under our very horses' feet.

Some hours after we had entered the forest path mother's horse shied in a peculiar way, and glancing down we saw a great rattle-snake winding his sinewy way across the trail. The reptile showed fight instead of retreat, and with a smothered scream mother spurred her horse, and was soon several yards from it; but father stopped to kill it, with some effort preventing the excited dog from seizing it in his huge jaws.

I stretched my small body as far as possible out of the pannier to see father beating the ground with a heavy stick. Presently he lifted the long body of the vanquished enemy and held it up, hanging a foot and a half on each side of the stick.

"Do not touch it! It might not be dead, and have power to bite you yet!" called mother in fright.

But father, anxious for a trophy, stayed by his victim long enough to secure his rattles.

"There!" he exclaimed, holding up the jingling, grey, shell-like appendage. "That

snake was ten years old, according to his rattles."

The killing of that snake was a matter of great importance to me; from that time forward I had perfect confidence in my father's prowess, and seemed to lose an overmastering fear of anything that might molest.

At the first appearance of the day's decline we halted, and my father, taking from the second horse the baggage, undid it, and took therefrom a small canvas tent.

When the tent was pitched, and securely pegged down, he proceeded to gather great quantities of brushwood. He worked hard for two hours, and having secured sufficient for the night, he went about lighting a fire.

First, he drew from a leather box which hung under his saddle-bag a small tin box, which he called a tinder-box. In this box was a black, feathery substance which a careless breath would have blown away, made by burning cotton cloth to a tinder. A worn-out summer shirt of mine, exalted by fire to the proper condition, now filled the tinder-box.

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I never saw that mysterious box brought out without experiencing a swelling of bosom over the fact that *my* old shirt was enough of importance to reign in another realm. It seemed to me that the shade of the garment had taken up its abode in that tin box, and in some mysterious way was exercising a power without which this world could not be run. How could I think otherwise, when all father had to do was to hold a piece of flint, about half the size of his hand, over that disembodied shirt in the tinder-box, strike it with a bar of grooved steel about four inches long, until a spark born of the contact dropped into the box, and instantly the tinder would be in a blaze?

Mother, standing ready, lighted a "dip"—made by "dousing" candlewick into melted tallow and allowing it to harden—then the tinder was smothered out, to preserve it for future fires.

The fire to cook our supper, which was built between some stones which father had arranged into a sort of fireplace, was lighted, and the dip, too, was extinguished.

Before we sat down to supper, which

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mother had prepared from material we had carried along with us in the other horse's saddle-bags, father lighted a huge brushwood fire. "This must be kept going full blast all night," he said, "to keep away the wolves and other prowlers; it will soon be dusk."

Even as he was speaking little patches of purple haze were creeping into the aisles between the distant pines; some birds were uttering continuous notes—"Saying vespers," said my mother—and occasionally a heavier note, as of some wandering spirit of the wood, smote the still air.

After he had started the great fire of brushwood right in front of our tent, father left us for a short time in the care of the bull-dog, Clinch—who by this time was assuming a friendly attitude toward me—to look about him, he said, to see whether there were any signs of Indians lurking in our vicinity. "From what I have heard about the Attiwandarons," he added, "I would not like to fall asleep if they were near neighbours."

The fact was, as we learned later, the

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tribe of Indians which my father feared had left that country many years before, and the peaceable Chippewas alone occupied the ground over which they formerly held sway; but father had acquired all his information from books which were somewhat out of date, and knew not of the great change.

It had now grown quite dusk, the wood pewee had ceased calling for something she never seemed to get; the great vistas between the trees had become more mysterious and impenetrable. It seemed to me I had never before seen the awful world of the dark; owls hooted mournfully, and the far-off stars winked solemnly down through the tree-tops as if furtively watching our every act.

I crept close up to mother and shoved my hand into hers. Mother shivered a little, and, rising from her seat, she led me to the foot of a great sycamore tree right in front of our tent, in the light of the brushwood fire. "Kneel down, Peter Paul," she said, "and say your evening psalm."

"How can I kneel down without any floor to kneel on?" said I.

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"Kneel down on God's beautiful green carpet," said my mother.

Trembling with awe, I dropped upon my knees, right down in the lush grass, shut my eyes, and repeated after my mother the twenty-third Psalm :

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." As I was saying these words I opened my eyes and glanced furtively around at the rank green grass, and the overhanging green leaves, which I knew were *very* green, although it was too dark then to see their colour distinctly, and I wondered how the Bible-man could know so long beforehand that I was going to sleep out among the green things.

Our beds consisted of spruce boughs which father had cut and spread in the tent. Father, his gun at his side, stretched himself at the door of the tent ; Clinch, with a green lurid light in his eyes, kindled no doubt by the distant howls in the woods, lay down not many feet from him. Over our heads the giant trees whispered together, as if holding a council about those strange people who had camped down in their midst ; one old

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tree swaying its long, lithe body with a grating sound which reminded me of the groans of a sick man I had at one time heard.

"Is that tree ill?" I inquired from the depths of my pillow of spruce boughs. Somehow they seemed to me to be great strong-armed giants around us, with feelings and ailments similar to our own.

"Only discontented, perhaps," said my mother sleepily. "It may be it wants to get out in the world as other trees have done."

A bird kept calling "Whip-poor-will! Whip-poor-will!" and before I had finished asking questions about it, many more of them, off at a great distance, began making the same demand. How thankful I felt that my name was not Will! Ghost-like shapes danced across the sides of our small tent, and my eyes, instead of closing at the wonted hour, stared unblinkingly into space.

An insect set up a thin, shrill little solo a few feet from my ear, and mother, knowing something of her small boy's imagination—she had often said, "He takes after *me*"—leaned over and whispered into my ear:

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"It's only a cricket, Peter Paul, or some near relative of the cricket family. You're not afraid?"

Afraid? What boy would acknowledge to fear? So I chattered, "No—mother—I—am—not—afraid."

Twice during the night I opened my eyes at Clinch's threatening growl (sometime during the dark hours of that night Clinch must have taken the oath of allegiance to my father and his family, for from that time forward he and they were inseparable), and saw father heaping more brushwood on the fire. And I always will believe that I saw great eyes blazing like stars looking out from the thick forest at our tent and fire.

The next morning my mother washed my face with dew that lay in great drops on the large tropical-looking leaves of the skunk cabbage. We ate food from the saddle-bags, and were ready for a fresh start.

After we had proceeded some hours on our second day's journey, there suddenly appeared in the trail before us a curious unkempt-looking girl about sixteen or eighteen years of age. She was high-cheeked-boned

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and brown, her eyes were small and bead-like, and her hair hung in long straight strands down on her cheeks.

"That is an Indian girl," said father, looking sharply at the strange creature, clad from head to foot in a plain hempen garment which fell in a straight line from her throat to her feet.

Even while he was speaking the girl drew nearer, and in good English addressed father and mother :

"Please mister, please missus, won't you take me to work for you? Me poor Injun girl, no fadder, no mudder. Work good for the lady," she added, spreading out her large sunburnt hands before my mother.

"Let us take her," said mother in a half-whisper to father; "it seems like a providential opportunity. You know, Thaddeus, that I'm a widge at house-keeping."

My mother was born in India, her father being an officer in the British Army in that country. Accustomed to ease and a warm climate, the life she was about to enter was an entirely new experience for her. My

beautiful young mother, however, was the daughter of a soldier, and prided herself on being daunted by nothing. My father was the younger son of one of "England's old families," as grandmother—his mother—often wrote him, and he entered the Army when he was twenty; his regiment immediately sailing for India. Here he met my mother, and they were married, without the approval of my grandparents, as mother told me one day when she was lonesome, and had no one else to talk to. My father in time found that his income was not sufficient to meet his increased expenses, and hearing that land was given for the asking in the new colony, sold his commission, and crossed the ocean to secure, as he thought, an estate such as *his* father owned in old England.

"Dear father," I heard my mother say years afterwards, "how little he thought that it would take a man a lifetime to cut down the trees and clear the land that was presented to him."

Father began to question the Indian girl, but got very little information; she was

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either very stupid, or assumed stupidity, father said, to avoid telling whence she came. She would say nothing regarding herself except, "Fadder an' mudder dead; no home."

The little colloquy ended by father telling the girl that she might come with us if she felt equal to walking all the way.

"Me always walk," returned the girl with something like an expression creeping into her stolid face.

"Well," said father, "tell us what your name is, now."

"Salvation," she replied promptly.

Mother and father exchanged glances, and father said, "How did you come by that name?"

"I save a little boy from drowning, an' my master he call me Salvation. That word too long, an' they call me Sal."

"Well, Sal is easier to say than Salvation!" said father. "But come along, anyhow."

The girl humbly dropped back a yard or two and plodded along after us.

At a certain point in the journey we were

joined by the surveyor whose work it was to apportion to each new settler his tract of land, and shortly afterward we reached the border of the two hundred acres which was the Crown's gift to father, for coming overseas to help settle and clear the new country.

"Are we to have no neighbours?" inquired my mother fearfully, looking with tremulous awe into the great primeval forest which was to be her future home.

"Your nearest neighbour is half a mile back of you," said the surveyor; "our backwoods gentleman. . . . I fancy he grew tired doing nothing, and playing the lord in old England, and came over to this country for an adventure. He came here white-fingered and fastidious, with drawing-room manners ill-suited to the woods; but despite the frills he is doing for the whole countryside—can cut down his tree with the next man, too. He is also something of a mystery, goes away several times a year on little jaunts, no one knows where. There are people who say that he is looking for somebody, or something, he has never yet found. But he always

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comes back, and everyone is glad to see him again. A well-trained Englishman, he has some knowledge of medicine and surgery, and as there is no medical practitioner within hundreds of miles, he has many calls to minister to the ailing. For his services he gets no remuneration except the thanks of the people. He is known over the entire peninsula by two titles—the 'Doctor,' and the 'Englishman.' ”

The surveyor had just finished his remarks when there walked briskly along the trail we had just travelled, a tall, young man, so striking in appearance that there was a hush in the conversation, and all eyes were fastened on him.

The surveyor called him into the woods, and introduced father and mother to “Mr. Godfrey Grey.”

His smile as he lifted his hat was very jolly; he shook hands cordially with my father and mother. Then, nodding towards the pannier in which I was seated, he said, “Welcome to the new country——” “Peter Paul,” interjected mother. “Little Peter Paul,” he concluded.

"The incalculable value of a smile—a smile from the heart," I heard my mother say later to my father, "as a burden-lifter and care-scatterer is beyond computation. The forest seemed a sort of enchanted place after I felt the warmth of that man's smile."

"You must make your home with me until your house is built," said the Englishman, with great politeness addressing mother.

"How very kind you are!" returned my mother.

"Not at all," declared the Englishman. "It is the natural mode of conduct in the new country. I shall leave you now to look about with the surveyor, but I shall return again to take you to my home."

"*He* cut down a tree!" laughed my father, looking after the graceful retreating figure. "Those long fingers were made for twirling a gold-headed cane—provided by someone else."

"Wait," returned the surveyor, "until you begin to clear your land; you may get a surprise."

While my elders continued to talk, my attention was suddenly arrested by the small

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dark head of a girl protruding from the pannier of the surveyor's saddle, and a pair of wonderful eyes which regarded me with interest.

"I want *her!*" I cried, as the surveyor rode away carrying his precious burden.

"Want the surveyor's little girl?" returned my mother. "Her father would not give her up."

I swallowed a sob in my throat and said no more, but the forest seemed an uninteresting place for the rest of that day.

That night we were all snugly ensconced in the Englishman's house, enjoying more luxuries than were to be found in other backwood homes. The following day father with his own axe went about cutting down the great trees, the Englishman, slim and delicate-looking as he was, insisting on helping him.

"I intend to have all the trees on the whole two hundred acres, not preserved for shade, cut down by the time Peter Paul is twenty-one," said my father to my mother that evening, in a confidential whisper I was not expected to hear.

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The next day I walked out like a veritable king, and looked at the great trees. I even addressed them aloud when no one was around to hear, telling them that in time they would all have to give away for my coming manhood. A slight wind had blown up—a herald of rain I had heard some of my elders say—which rustled the foliage of the trees. I listened to the noise they were making for some moments, then I cried indignantly :

“ You may shake your heads, O trees, and clap your hands ”—I remembered hearing mother read from the Bible about trees clapping their hands—“ but you’ll all be lying flat by the time I am twenty-one ! ”

Presently the rain began to fall in great sheets, and I saw the water dropping from the leaves.

“ They are crying, ” I whispered, “ because of what I have told them ! ”

But my heart was not softened ; indeed, I stood exulting among the weeping things until someone came to fetch me indoors.

“ Why did you stay out in the rain until

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you were drenched to the skin, Peter Paul?" said my mother, as she was drawing off my soaked garments.

"I—I was watching the trees," I stammered.

"Watching the trees?" said my mother.

"I—was watching the trees cry," I further explained.

"Watching the trees cry?" repeated mother.

"I was watching the trees cry, because I told them they would all be down flat on the ground and dead by the time I am twenty-one."

Mother wiped my face with a towel, and asked no more questions, but her eyes were laughing, and there were curious twitchings about her lips.

The third day the choppers were joined by Jacob Cloud, the best chopper on the peninsula; and in a few days other neighbours, hearing the ring of the axes, came and offered their assistance.

It was my pleasure to sit where I could watch the work. Chopping seemed to be exceedingly delightful employment; each

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stroke of an axe was echoed distinctly in the woods ; surely some unseen, mysterious axeman, off in the fastnesses of the forest, was giving blow for blow with the men whom I could see putting forth strenuous effort. The smell of the freshly-cut timber was sweet and pungent, the great chips were clean and white ; and, oh, to see a small man knock to earth a great tree, two or three times the thickness of himself, and fifty or one hundred feet high, why, it was as great a miracle as a David felling to the ground a Goliath !

There had to be great skill exercised in felling a tree ; first, the chopper had to see that there was no other in the way to obstruct the fall of the one he wished to cut down. Then he must look to the "*lean*" of the tree, and unless he had a wish to throw it another way, he felled it according to the lean. The most usual lean of the tree was to the south or south-west, the result of prevailing north-east winds. All this I had learned by listening to the men talk. I also learned that the north side of the tree could be generally known by the moss

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which the dampness caused to grow on that side.

The first notch was to be made on the side toward which it was desired that the tree should fall. This notch was cut three or four feet from the ground, according to the height of the chopper. It was usually cut half-way through the tree, the upper part slanting, the lower part horizontal. Then the chopper passed to the other side of the tree and cut a similar notch, only he made it a couple of inches higher up, in order to throw the tree in the opposite way. If the tree was very straight the notch had to be deeper, for in that case it balanced on a very narrow pedestal; but if there was the smallest *lean* the chopper would not have to cut the second notch more than half as deep as the first before the tree began to nod and quiver, as if in the agonies of dissolution.

At this hint the men would run to the right hand or left, never opposite either notches, and the monarch of the forest would fall with a groan which echoed solemnly through the aisles of the woods. There was a stirring in the air as if it had heaved a deep

sigh, the wild birds screamed and flapped out of sight, the squirrels chattered ; indeed, all the wood-folk that had a voice raised it, as if in protest against the slaughter of the monarch, while I stood by inwardly exulting that another one of those giants which were holding the ground against my father—and against me and that great time when I should be twenty-one—had bowed its head in death.

Jacob Cloud was an accomplished bushman, and could calculate so accurately the length of time that it would take a tree to fall, that on a wager of a quart of whisky, at that clearing for my father's house, he walked under a falling tree, just allowing the branches which crowned its top to switch him on the heels as it reached the ground.

CHAPTER II

A LODGE IN A VAST WILDERNESS

THE underbrush lay where it chanced to fall, a thick mass carpeting the ground, on which lay the trunks of trees of all sizes. When the mass had become dry, as it soon did with the heat of the sun, a blazing fagot was touched to some of the pine needles, and soon nothing could be heard but the furious roaring and crackling of the dry leaves and smaller branches, and as a result a great curtain of black smoke obscured the sun and sky for some hours. When the fire had done its work, all that remained was blackened stumps and logs.

The Englishman consulted with father, and advised a "logging-bee," offering to go round and invite the "hands."

On a certain day the neighbours again assembled. Small iron-wood trees were cut down and shaped into handspikes to be used in rolling the logs. The services of two yoke of oxen were also required.

Candlelight Days

In the morning the "hands" were white men ; by night they were as black as negroes. The day was warm, and sweating faces were rubbed with blackened shirt sleeves, and more blackened hands, and soon I could not tell one man from another.

The great logs were rolled into piles to be burned to ashes, for more money could be obtained at that time for ashes than for lumber.

The same kind neighbours came again and helped my father erect his house. The rock elm was the favourite for building, and in full dress of brown bark the log walls of our house were put up.

This house was looked upon afterwards as quite the castle of the neighbourhood, because it had an attic. The attic was divided into two compartments, one for my sleeping-room, and the other for the use of Sallie, the Indian girl.

Shingles were unknown in the country, and "basswood scoops" were used in their stead. These were basswood logs split through the centre, and the wood scooped out until there was left a thin concave shell. One

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log provided two "scoops." These were laid side by side, hollow side upwards, and over the seam where the first two were joined was placed another with the hollow side down.

"An admirable defence against the snow and rain these scoops make," said the Englishman, when explaining them to father.

The bank of the Chippewa Creek, sometimes called "river," was the locality of the log shanty we called home. It was built on a rise of land, and mother christened it, "The House on the Hill-top."

The most noticeable feature about our new house was the great fireplace, in which father at times burned the largest stumps. A fire of pine stumps was a sight one could never forget. The cheerful wood—which seemed to talk to one in snapping, crackling words—the long tongues of yellow and red flame which impelled the words; and, oh! the castles, mountains, bears, birds, men, horses, dragons which I saw in those great fireplaces; wondrous pictures of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth.

Candlelight Days

My father on a winter's night, fashioning an axe-handle by the light of a stump fire, my mother and I cracking butter-nuts on the great hearth-stone, while the Indian girl Sallie sat in the dim background knitting her stockings. Was there ever painted on one's memory a more beautiful picture than that ?

My mother, who had a fanciful imagination, placed over our fireplace the inscription :

“ Praise the good log-fire
Winter howls without.
Crowd closer let us ! ”

At first our house had no flooring to the lower rooms, and the stumps of some of the trees were allowed to remain to serve as seats. We did not sit at a table when partaking of our meals, but each one of us carried a plateful of food and sat down on a stump to eat it. I, being a little fellow, had one stump cut specially low for me.

“ Here, Peter Paul, sit down on your stump and let me give you your soup,” mother said every day at the noon hour.

I, my mouth watering at the thought of the savoury wild-turkey soup, obeyed with

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alacrity; and for the next quarter of an hour I would sit trying to steady my soup-plate on my knee with my left hand, while with my right I spooned the hot fluid into my mouth.

My father's flint-lock lay beside his axe, equally important in conducing to the comfort of our daily lives; with it he brought down the deer and wild fowl on which we largely lived; with it he kept off the bears and wolves when they threatened to come too close to our dwelling; and with it he stood as a person to be honoured and feared among the neighbouring Indians.

Father and I spent many happy hours following up the many small streams which intersected our bush farm. Sometimes mother came along, too, for she said the running water always spoke to her of the old home and the home-folk. At such times we would leave her talking to the streams while we went fishing, or hunting up the home of the beaver and the otter.

Which of the seasons brought the greatest charm to us in the bush-world it would be impossible to say.

Spring—and the piping of the frogs in the reedy pools! The cawing of the crows as they flapped over the tree-tops! The partridges beating their drums in the undergrowth! The wild scurryings to and fro of the stripe-coated chipmunks! The chattering of the red squirrels! The woodpecker seeming to tap out his brains against some great tree trunk! The violets and hepaticas smiling in thousands up from the black leaf-mould! The green grass creeping everywhere it had a chance over the brown earth! And last, though not least, the wild pigeons like a blue cloud obscuring the sun.

“Those wild pigeons with their lovely plumage, sweet cooings, courtly bows, and wild mournful calls make a great impression upon me,” said a kindly old clergyman who at one time passed through our country, and was a guest at our house for a week. “Two animals stand out stronger in my thoughts than any other: the snake and the pigeon. They both remind me of an unseen world. To me the snake always suggests the Dark World, but the pigeon speaks of the Realms of Light. I feel there is something mystic about

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the wild pigeon, an air of some better land, and a tender sadness in its note, as if calling to something afar off. Most significant this," he added, looking at my mother: "the serpent bruised His heel; the dove alighted on His head."

After this I spent a whole half-day poking young garter snakes, which were quite numerous at the time, out of holes and from under stumps, to see what that queer thing the "Dark World" was like. And I watched and listened to the blue-winged pigeons by the hour and day to hear them "speak of the Realms of Light."

Closely associated with the memory of spring, with the tender green of its foliage, the purple of its wild violets, the blue of its skies, the songs of its birds, and the whisperings of its breezes, comes the troublous thought of its mosquitoes. The neighbours who had helped my father to build his house, also taught him how to make a "smudge." This was a dish of mingled dust and chips, which never blazed, but which kept up a perpetual smoking.

This smudge was placed in the evening in

the door of our small house to keep the mosquitoes outside, while we with red and watery eyes sat within, wondering whether the little singing pests could be any worse than the smoke.

Summer followed, when the thousands of trees in their full-leaved glory seemed to curtain us in from the outside world. Near our house, where the trees had been cut down, many kinds of vegetation sprang to life, as if they had only been waiting below the surface of the soil for this opportunity. The gooseberry, smooth and thorny; the raspberry, red and black; the colonies of weeds, "like an army with banners," said my mother, took possession of the land. Tall mulleins, with their soft grey-green leaves; jewel-weeds, bearing aloft their little yellow jewelled slippers; thistles, tufted with purple, which reminded me of a Highland neighbour's Scotch bonnet.

But autumn! Autumn! surely that was the queen of seasons; when the great forest began putting on her harvest dress of gold and scarlet and bronze. To watch the trees drop their nuts and leaves, disclosing their

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purple-grey trunks and branches filled one small heart with a joy unspeakable. Did a boy ever hear sweeter music than the rustling of his feet through the millions of fallen leaves? Did one ever have more thrilling sensations than those experienced when the October wind rioted with his garments, dishevelled his hair, and whistled and shrieked in wildest glee through the tree-tops? Did one ever see a grander sight than the assemblies of birds preparing to go south, calling farewells to each other over acres and miles of space?

No less welcome winter then succeeded, spreading a white carpet of snow over the ground, and draping the trees, like queens, in ermine. Even the logs and the unsightly roots assumed fantastic shapes when wrapped in soft clinging whiteness. The acres of stumps seemed transformed into beautifully rounded domes of purest marble.

Father had been advised to leave the stumps, which still tenaciously clutched the ground, until they dried; then, he was informed, he could pull them out like so many teeth, and use them to make stump fences.

To be lulled to sleep every night by the howling of the wolves, and the barking of the foxes ; to be awakened every morning by the ecstatic notes of the chicadees, what more could a small boy want to make a winter impressive ?

The Englishman fashioned snow-shoes, a pair for me and a pair for himself, with which we could travel over the white world without sinking ; and I gloried, as I am sure he did, as we strode like giants where without them it would have been impossible for us to go.

He would hold my coat and Sallie's sacque while we ran snow-shoe races—Sallie having made her own shoes—generally giving a prize of money to the winner.

Bob-sleigh riding was another winter pleasure which we enjoyed. No automobile, flying through the country at a record-breaking pace, can give one's nerves the delightful thrills which were experienced bumping over the corduroy roads on a bob-sleigh.

The corduroy road consisted of naked round logs laid side by side to form a sort of bridge over a "soft" or swampy spot.

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"To go bumping over a corduroy road in a springless cart or wagon," said my father, "is good for the liver, but perilous for the teeth, and the tongue which gets between them." Because I had heard him say this, I was very careful to keep my tongue still while driving over a corduroy road.

It was during our first spring, when father was out among the stumps hoeing, preparing the place to plant potatoes, that he saw a fleet of canoes coming down the river. The rhythmic paddling told him they were Indians, and coming quickly into the house he climbed up the flight of narrow steps to the loft, to get a better view of the river.

"They are Indians; they have fifty canoes—I have counted them. It's a funeral party. I see the body lying in state in one of the canoes," father called down to mother.

"They mean no harm to anybody; they are all peaceful, satisfied Indians around here now," said father after he had seen the canoes land about a mile down the river. "I will run down and see the funeral exercises."

He laughed mother out of her fears when she remonstrated with him about going, but he refused to take me along with him, saying, "If they object to my presence at the ceremony, it will be easier for me to get away if I am by myself."

An hour after father came back with the whole story for mother and myself. It was the body of a Chippewa chief that had been committed to the earth. The body was dressed in coat, leggings, and moccasins of buckskin, heavily ornamented with beads, and other embroideries of porcupine quills and feathers. In the grave beside the chief were placed a bow, some arrow-heads, and a tomahawk. The Indians formed a circle around the grave, and a chief began the service. He faced the point of the rising sun; holding a tomahawk at arm's length, and swinging it, he pointed first at the dead man in the grave, and then turned to the sun, gibberishing all the while in his own language.

"It is the old worship of the sun," said father.

Another day, while digging around the

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roots of a pine stump, my father unearthed a twelve-quart pailful of flint arrow-heads.

"They may have been placed there a thousand years ago, Peter Paul," he said. "The pine tree has grown over them, and covered them with her roots. Then the century-living pine grew old and died, and here the arrow-heads remain to tell the story of the past."

Further along the Chippewa stream, about a mile distant, lived Solomon Slater with his two daughters, 'Lizabeth Hannah and Mary Martha, and their yoke of oxen, "Cromwell" and "Blucher." Solomon smoked all the time he was awake, and as real tobacco was scarce, he smoked beech leaves. Many a joyous day I spent helping him gather the leaves, which he dried on the roof of his cook-house.

'Lizabeth Hannah was large, strong, raw-boned, masterful, and to be wholesomely feared; this was my child's thought when I looked at her for the first time. Mary Martha was small, meek, nice to look at, and made to be loved.

I often went to visit Mary Martha, for the

reason that she could always see and hear queer things that other people never saw or heard. Since I have reached the years of maturity I have to conclude that if Mary Martha had lived where her talents could have been used and developed, she would have been a fiction writer of no mean order. If genius is the power of seeing the invisible, and hearing the inaudible, the capacity to dream, and see without eyes, then Mary Martha was a genius.

Talking to me was the only outlet she had for her imagination, for I noticed that she was silent pertaining to those mysteries which she loved when either her father or 'Lizabeth Hannah was present. It was my joy to sit in front of the great fireplace in her home, with the bundles of sweet-smelling herbs, and strings of dried apples and pumpkins hanging to the beams overhead, and gaze with her into the sheets of yellow flame, and the glowing piles of embers, and listen to her talk.

When the wind on autumn days moaned and howled, and shrieked down the wide mouth of the great chimney, Mary Martha

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world say, "Listen, Peter Paul, to the great Wind Spirit; he's out to-night, and he's terribly troubled about something. Probably he's made a wreck at sea," she would continue, with a look in her eyes as if she were at that moment sweeping with one quick glance all the oceans of the world. "The brave and the fair are lying fathoms deep, Peter Paul, under tons and tons of cruel water, and it was his furious strokes which knocked them down there. He has uprooted noble trees, fretted little wayside brooks, and lifted from their depths, and thrown down again in confusion and fury, the waters of sunny lakes. Oh, he has been playing the fiend, Peter Paul—the fiend!"

She would pause then awhile, and I would listen trembling to the awful voice of the powerful element out-doors.

"It is heart-breaking, isn't it, Peter Paul?" she would continue. "He is sorry now for what he has done, and his remorse is bitter, *bitter!* It is heart-breaking, and we must forgive him, Peter Paul, when he suffers so for his misdeeds; we cannot bear his agonising voice, we must forgive,

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and then perhaps he'll not cry down *our* chimney. Let us tell him that we forgive him."

Then the two of us would put our heads together, and with our faces as near the blaze as we would dare to have them, we would call up the wide chimney, "Oh, Wind Spirit, do not grieve so; what you have done cannot be undone now! We forgive you, we *forgive* you all your misdeeds!"

Another time, when the wind was cheerily whistling, she would say in a whisper, as if afraid of disturbing his glee!

"Peter Paul, he has been at a picnic, and has been playing with the children. Hear their laugh in his voice! The old fellow is gay to-day, he has pulled off the caps of the boys, and tangled the curls of the girls, kissing their rosy cheeks—the saucy fellow! He has been up in the tree-top among the sweet-smelling blossoms, nuzzling among the leaves, like a baby just learning to kiss." Perhaps, too, she would add, after a moment's silence, "He has been turning the windmills all over the country, pumping water for the poor thirsty animals, and grinding the farmers'

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grain. He has been doing good, and he is happy, Peter Paul, *happy*, just as *we* are when we do good."

Another day when the wind sighed, Mary Martha would say:

"Oh, Peter Paul, he has seen sorrow out in the great world; he has been sighing over graves, or battle-fields."

Then, on winter days, when we two were alone in front of the fireplace, she would say, as the bitter blast blew down the chimney:

"Ah! he is out to-day tossing snow, the Wind Spirit; do you hear him, Peter Paul? His voice has a different sound when he is piling snow-banks. He is playing with purity, and his tones sound high and clear; building white mountains, and covering with white graves which have never been grass-covered. He has been filling up unsightly hollows, and making this black old world look white."

When it was very calm, and there was no wind to talk about, Mary Martha would allow her imagination to play around the great wood-fire in the fireplace.

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"See, Peter Paul," she would say mysteriously, her eyes with a strange light fastened on the sheet of yellow flame, as it rose in its majesty clasping the hemlock logs in an overwhelming embrace, and, as it seemed, spiriting them away, "these great hemlock boughs have had experiences beyond ours. They have lived up in the blue, and have daily received the first kiss from the warm lips of the sun; they have companioned with the moon and stars, and listened to the music of the spheres; the zephyrs of spring have played first among their needles, the returning birds have found in them a grateful resting-place, and perhaps the bravest bird has selected that heaven-kissing site to build a nest and raise her young. Now they are going off with the fire to another realm *we* know nothing about, Peter Paul."

Dear Mary Martha, with all her dreaming, how little she imagined that a time would come when the great hemlock boughs would be flying over the world in the form of the daily newspaper and the latest book!

It was during the "hungry year" that a secret between Mary Martha and myself—

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which no one else knew anything about excepting mother—strengthened our bond of friendship.

A very cold and wet summer caused a failure in vegetation. With this failure even the wild animals deserted the country, and some people, with whom money was wellnigh an unknown quantity, had a very hard time getting through the winter. Beech leaves were brewed for tea, and sometimes they were chopped up for food.

Solomon Slater was not the most thrifty of providers; he generally waited for chance to bring to his door the necessities of life. This did tolerably well while game was plentiful, and the vegetables 'Lizabeth Hannah planted in the garden turned out a good crop, but the year in question both were failures, consequently the family had to suffer. I do not think this fretted the old man very much so long as beech leaves were plentiful and he could have his regular number of smokes.

"Ah, Peter Paul," he said to me, out of a cloud of thick smoke which enveloped his head as he sat on the stoop of his log home,

"if the beech tree don't fail me *I* can live."

It was Mary Martha who told me some of the family privations one day as we were seated in our accustomed places before the fireplace, 'Lizabeth Hannah and the father having gone to Niagara village. I do not think that even Mary Martha would have told me the trouble only that her heart was bursting with grief at the possible fate which threatened Cromwell and Blucher.

There must have been some talk of sacrificing them, for Mary Martha burst out in a perfect frenzy of tears :

"It would seem almost like cannibalism to kill and eat Cromwell and Blucher !"

That evening I told Mary Martha's secret to my mother, and the result was that she, although ill able to spare it, sent the family over a little neighbourly present of two bushels of wheat.

'Lizabeth Hannah, never dreaming that Mary Martha had divulged the secret of their great need, graciously accepted the present.

With the coming of the wheat a happy expedient came to the brain of 'Lizabeth

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Hannah, and the secret of this expedient Mary Martha also told me the first time she had an opportunity. I think she was so happy because Cromwell and Blucher were saved that she simply could not help telling her secret to someone. 'Lizabeth Hannah's proposition was to bleed the oxen a little every day, grind some of the wheat, and by cooking the blood and wheat, with a pinch of salt and a grain of pepper, make a dish to sustain the family.

The lives of Cromwell and Blucher were saved, as were also the lives of the Slater household, but by spring the former were not much more than able to stand on their feet.

The new grass, however, restored them quickly to their normal strength.

CHAPTER III

ISHBEL

ON our other wing, about the same distance away, lived Malcolm Macfarlane, called "Highland Malcolm," because he wore a kilt, except in the coldest of weather, and because he was an expert player on that curious instrument, the bagpipes.

Highland Malcolm believed that the moon meddled with the ripening of his pea-field, that she caused a shrinkage in the weight of pork killed in her decline; that onions only grew well when planted "in the dark of the moon," and that a moon on its back meant dry weather.

"There's a softness in Highland Malcolm's Gaelic beyond that of any other Scotsman's speech," said my mother.

Perhaps that was the reason I never felt afraid of him, and carried to him many of my problems.

Speaking on the subject himself, he said.

"Gaelic the devils do not understaun', an' the angels praise God in."

Highland Malcolm had a wide reputation, but not so wide as that of his son Alec. Alec Macfarlane was a name by which children all over the peninsula were frightened into doing their duty.

If any child were stubborn or disobedient, he was told in awful, admonitory tones that he was going to turn out a second Alec Macfarlane. This was so terrible a reprimand that the young culprit—if he were a very little fellow—usually withdrew to the woodshed, or some hidden corner, to shed tears and make resolutions to amend his ways.

Alec had formed his roving, lawless habits during the war, and at its close could not settle down, so continued roving in the capacity of a hunter and trapper.

If a boy were not a very little fellow—wearing girl's clothes—he very often secretly admired Alec Macfarlane. His hunter's blouse and buckskin breeches showed to advantage a most athletic figure. Around his waist was strapped a brace of pistols and a large knife; and pinned to the breast of his blouse was a

silver medal which he had won during the war. It was two-and-a-half inches in diameter, and on one side was inscribed the words: "*For Merit. Presented By A Grateful Country.*" On the reverse side was engraved a strait between two lakes. On the north of this strait was a beaver, the emblem of Canada, and a slumbering lion, representing Great Britain. On the south side of the strait was an American eagle poising in the air, as if checked from seizing the beaver by the presence of the lion. Underneath all were the words, "*Upper Canada Preserved.*"

Next neighbour to Highland Malcolm was "Long Tom" Jones. Long Tom had more than one accomplishment, and augmented his income by going from house to house with a roll of leather under his right arm, and a ball of wax, some needles and hemp in under his left, for the purpose of making shoes for the neighbours. This he did between seasons of sowing and reaping the limited crops that grew on the small portion of land that he had cleared. Owing to his wanderings over the peninsula, Long Tom had many experiences which he loved to relate. There was one in

particular that he repeated to me every time his services were in demand at our house. As soon as he had got fairly at work, stitching an "upper," or pegging a "sole," he would glance up, and finding my eyes intently fixed on him, with the expectancy of the story in them, he would begin:

"Wolves are pesky things. Titus, my brother-in-law up the crik here, was comin' home one evening from Niagara village carryin' ten pounds of tea. There was a big family o' women in his house—his mother and her mother, an' one or two aged aunts; an' real tea growed in China couldn't be very well done without. But Titus calculated he'd enough to do a year in that ten pounds. He was two-thirds home when he heard a pack o' wolves on his track, an' he had to throw down his tea and run for a tree. He clim' the tree, an' the wolves came up an' tore open his parcel o' tea—he watchin' 'em from the tree-top—an' nosed it all around. After a while he caught the *tank-a-tonk*, *tank-tank* of sleigh bells. The wolves caught the sound, too, an' put off. When the sleigh came up Titus hailed them, slid down

from the tree, an' gathered up all he could of his tea, packed it in the sleigh an' carried it home. An' all the women drank it an' never knowed by the flavour that the wolves had nosed it 'round."

Then always followed immediately my question: "Did *you* drink any of the tea?"

"No," he would say, glancing up from his work to wink at me, "under the *circumstances* I prefaired the tea made from the spearmint that growed here in the bush."

Then I would hug myself and laugh uproariously—as if I had never heard the story before—at the thought of the women drinking unconsciously the tea that the wolves had nosed.

Farther along, again, on the Chippewa lived Neil Campbell, the best Presbyterian; Jacob Cloud, the best chopper; and James Bryce, the best speller on the peninsula.

It became necessary for us, after we no longer depended upon the hospitality of our neighbours, that we learn to make our own bread.

Following the directions of an experienced flour-maker, my father found a great oak

stump, and with a mallet and chisel he gouged a hollow basin a foot and a half in diameter in the heart of it. Into this hollow he put some wheat, and with a large wooden mallet, which he had cut from the heart of another tree, he pounded the wheat until every grain was mashed.

"Here, Teresa, is your flour," said my father, bringing his pounded wheat in a basin to my mother. "See what you can do at bread-making."

The Englishman informed mother that 'Lizabeth Hannah Slater was gifted in the art of bread-making, and my mother made a journey on horseback to learn her secret.

She came back with a very doubtful look on her face, and what 'Lizabeth Hannah called "barm" in a small vessel.

"Pour some water into your handfuls of flour, throw in a pinch of salt, and add barm. When you have left it to rise as often as I have told you, put bread in pans and cover it over with hot ashes, and leave an hour." This is the recipe which mother read off to father, 'Lizabeth Hannah having written it on a strip of birch bark.

Mother made the bread, and a few weeks later my father broke it into small nuggets with a hammer for me to amuse myself throwing it at the squirrels. After many, many attempts, mother turned out bread that we all declared was quite equal to 'Lizabeth Hannah's.

It was while my mother and I were on our way to visit Mrs. Macfarlane that we saw the first Indian corn.

"That must be the part they eat," said mother, pointing to the silky tassels that crowned the top of the plants. "It is a large plant for such a small fruit."

But when we reached Mrs. Macfarlane's home she showed us some corn-cobs, and told us *they* were the part that was eaten, not the tassels.

"Take a dozen home with you," said Mrs. Macfarlane, "just to have your first taste."

When we reached home, mother placed an open kettle filled with water over the fireplace, and when the water was boiling, according to our neighbour's instructions, she put the ears of corn, "with a pinch of salt," into the

kettle. "Boil until soft," was the neighbour's advice.

Mother stood over the boiling pot of corn for an hour, trying it frequently with a fork to feel whether the cobs were getting soft. I, also, anxiously watching the boiling pot, stood by the fire most of the time.

At the end of an hour's boiling, although mother could not push her fork through a single cob of the corn, she concluded that it must be cooked, and lifted it off the fire. "Almost anything will cook in an hour's hard boiling," she remarked, dipping the cobs out of the boiling water with a skimmer, and placing them on our supper table.

Father, mother, and I sat down to enjoy our new dish; but do our best we could not get our teeth through a single cob.

"They must have better teeth in this new country than ours," said my mother, "when they can eat such food as this."

After many efforts we all threw down our corn in disgust.

"A taste for corn is something that has to be cultivated," said my mother, "and also the ability to eat it."

The next time we saw the corn-donor she explained that we should have held the cobs in our hands, and gnawed off the grains of corn with our teeth, something after the fashion in which Clinch gnawed the flesh off deer bones, which father frequently threw to him.

It was Highland Malcolm who taught my father how to cultivate flax and raise sheep ; and it was 'Lizabeth Hannah Slater who taught my mother how to spin the flax and wool into thread, and afterwards to weave it into cloth.

I can shut my eyes at any time and see my pretty, delicate mother, who had figured as a belle among the military aristocracy of India, spinning at her large wheel ; the great, gaunt, awkward 'Lizabeth Hannah standing over her, teaching her how to hold the thread with her left hand, while she walked backward turning the wheel with her right. Many a mile her small moccasined feet trod over that old hard wooden floor—for before the spinning began in our house we had a floor—after the hundreds of yards of thread she spun for knitting and weaving purposes.

On winter evenings the firelight was strong enough to read by, but few of the settlers had any book except the Bible.

"I've a terrible interestin' story-book now," said 'Lizabeth Hannah on one of her visits to our house, "it has been lent me to give me the readin'. I'll give it to you folks when I am done. It is named 'Fuxe's Book of Martyrs.' It's terrible interestin'. I sat up till all o' nine o'clock last night over it."

This "story-book" was read all through the neighbourhood, followed by "Butler's Analogy," "Baxter's Saints' Best," and "Pilgrim's Progress."

The telling of stories to a small audience grouped around some fireplace was a favourite pastime on long winter evenings. How glad I always felt when Highland Malcolm lifted our wooden latch and walked in (it would have been considered foolish airs in the backwoods to have taken time to *knock* on the door of a neighbour), for he was full of stories.

The Englishman ranked next to Highland Malcolm, in my estimation, as a story-teller. The latter loved to go back to the hills of

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Scotland for his stories, and wild ones they were ; while the Englishman told of deeds of daring in the Canadian forest.

He seemed to enjoy getting me seated in front of his fireplace, my small eager face almost blistered with the heat, which was very great from the burning pine knots, while he related stories of the Attiwandarons, who at one time roamed the forest paths which were now familiar to my feet.

" They were as clever as we, Peter Paul, with all our colleges and study of physic and surgery," he would say. " If in the depth of this primeval forest an Attiwandaron broke a leg or arm, a man of the tribe who understood bone-setting would put the bone in place, other Indians would cut branches of uniform length and thickness, while the squaws hastened to gather moss or the down of the cat-tail that grows in the swamps, with which to line those branches before they were bound with willow withs, or young birch, as splints to the broken limb. If the accident happened in winter, cedar or hemlock shavings and fine twigs were used as padding. Pine needles and fine hay were gathered by the

squaws and a cushion made for the injured limb. If the limb could not be saved, they would take it off with stone knives, checking the bleeding with heated stones.

"If one should contract a fever," he would continue, "they would inclose him in the centre of a small tent, build a fire all around him inside the tent, heat stones on which they would pour water until the air of the tent was saturated with vapour, and the patient was copiously sweating. We do not know it all, Peter Paul; there were clever people ahead of us."

He would always conclude such stories by the remark, "This peninsula is one huge grave, Peter Paul, a grave hundreds of years old, silently, eloquently telling the story of a vanished race—the great nation of the Attiwandarons."

I would shiver every time the remark was made, until the rush-bottomed chair on which I was seated would shake under me, and draw still nearer the fire—the great heat of which was almost unendurable—and a little farther from the darkness in the room behind. How could I be sure that the darkness was not

peopled by the ghosts of the dead Attiwandarons?

The day following this story I would walk along the woodland path with great care, stepping gingerly for fear I might set foot on a hillock which might be the grave of an Attiwandaron.

"Attiwandarons," I would say aloud—nobody in the flesh being around to hear me—"Peter Paul Thornton does not want to step on your graves; if he does it is because he cannot help himself—because he does not know where they are. And he hopes that you will excuse him, and not hold it up against him, or send your ghosts back to walk around and bother him." My mind felt more at rest after that address.

In summer-time I would gather armfuls of wild flowers and spread them thickly over all the little hillocks in the vicinity of the places where I played, thinking to appease the wrath of the Attiwandarons on whose graves I might accidentally have trodden.

The thought of resentful Attiwandarons was happily dispelled by the coming into our neighbourhood of the surveyor whose business

it was to apportion each new settler his acreage of land. He came to live among us for awhile, bringing along with him his little daughter, she who had won my heart at first sight while seated in the saddle pannier. I had been wanting her ever since that time, and my delight was unbounded when I again laid eyes on her and learned that she was to live in a house not very far from my father's.

Her beauty and daintiness almost took my breath away. At first I stood off in awe and watched her every act, listening to her voice as I listened to Highland Malcolm's bagpipes, or Jacob Cloud's fiddle; but sweeter, much sweeter it was than either of them.

When we became better acquainted, and I was less afraid of her, it was my extreme pleasure to initiate her into the mysteries of the forest, show her the birds' nests, and the burrows of the little wild animals; find for her the berries, display before her my knowledge of the various trees over our heads, and the wild flowers at our feet.

"Peter Paul," cried her little piping voice many times a day, "what's the name of *this* tree?" And I would feel a very Solon in

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wisdom while giving her the desired information.

Every day before Ishbel was allowed to go out to play with me, her tender little white fingers had a certain amount of "hemming," "felling," or "whipping" to do. There were long sheets, the selvedge edges of which had to be whipped together by hand, so that when the middle showed signs of wearing a little, the seam could be ripped out and the outer edges sewed together, and so the life of the sheet could be preserved several years.

Whipping sheets was the work Ishbel was engaged at when she first came to our neighbourhood; she would sit with the cloth pinned to her small knee, her needle threaded with strong thread, while she "whipped—whipped—whipped," the very thread speaking the words, seemingly, as she worked, I looking on, half jealous because she, a girl, could do something I could not do.

"I can turn the grindstone," I remarked, as I watched her gleaming needle for the first time.

She whipped on without reply.

"I can frighten the crows from the corn."
She whipped on.

"I can gather the eggs, and make smudges."

She whipped on.

Frequently I felt very angry that she was compelled to stay in the house at all to sew sheets—her mother said it was to train her how to do it—and I regarded her mother as a sort of cruel giant exercising her power over the pigmy, Ishbel.

When a certain amount of sewing had been done, we were both given a "cookie," and allowed to go out and wander hand in hand at our sweet will among the trees and singing birds.

Only one summer of this delightful pleasure was mine, then Ishbel's father moved away, taking his little girl along with him.

I shed bitter tears the day she went, although allowing no one to see them, such was my manly pride.

"Ishbel," I whispered, before she walked away from me the last time, "will you ever come back again?"

"Oh, yes," she whispered in return, her lips very near my ear. "I'll be sure to come

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back. I never could stay away always, *always* from you, Peter Paul, *never*."

What a loneliness and mystery were in the woods after she had gone! I stole along the paths and listened to many voices. Out from under every large leaf which covered the ground the small voice of some sprite or fairy seemed to whisper:

"Ishbel's gone! Ishbel's gone!"

Then the tall trees shook their leaves and repeated, heartlessly, I thought:

"Ishbel's gone! Ishbel's gone!"

Next the wind, whistling, and sweeping the dry twigs in little bundles before it, ended its skirmish by sighing:

"Ishbel's gone! Ishbel's gone!"

My very footsteps, as I walked along the trodden path, seemed to keep repeating sympathetically:

"Ishbel's gone! Ishbel's gone!"

In desperation I stood still, and waving my arms above my head to command silence among the voices, I fairly screamed:

"But she's coming *back* again! She said, 'I never could stay away always, *always* from you, Peter Paul, *never*!'"

CHAPTER IV

IN THE HARDWOOD BUSH

SALLIE, the Indian girl, continued with us, and the morose, heavy expression was leaving her face, when one day a printed sheet was dropped at our door, which contained the following notice :

" All persons are forbidden harbouring, employing, or concealing my Indian slave called Sal, as I am determined to prosecute any offender to the utmost extent of the law. And persons who may suffer her to remain on their premises for the space of half-an-hour, without my written consent, will be taken as offending and dealt with according to the law."

Mother almost fainted, and father said that we must send Sallie away at once.

Sallie cried bitterly when the announcement on the printed sheet was made known

to her. She ran out into the woods and swayed her body from side to side, like a tree that was rocked by the wind, and muttered something about throwing herself into the Niagara river before allowing herself to be captured by her former owner.

"Him cruel man! Him cruel man!" she kept repeating.

At this juncture the Englishman walked in, and learning the trouble, said: "That fellow has great audacity to advertise that he is breaking the law. And the poor ignorant aborigines being imposed upon are not aware that a law exists in this land against one human being enslaving another. Those most extraordinary people, the United Empire Loyalists, came into the country long ago, bringing their negro slaves with them, and thus introduced the practice, no doubt to a people very willing to copy. It was natural for the unscrupulous to fall on the untaught aborigine, and enslave the women and children. Poor brown maiden!" he added, his mind reverting to Sallie; "a few years and the chariot of civilisation has overtaken her race, promising fairly to trample them in the dust."

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"Well," said my mother, "if it is against the law no one shall enslave Sallie again," and seizing a quill pen, and dipping it into a dish of pokeberry juice, she wrote:

"Anyone who dares attempt to capture or enslave the Indian girl called Sal, who is now domesticated in the house of Thaddeus Thornton, shall be prosecuted to the extent of the law.

"TERESA THORNTON."

The Englishman carried away the written notice to print off a number of copies on a hand-press, of which he was the happy possessor; and when that was done he purposed to send a courier on horseback through the country to distribute them.

The result of all this was that Sallie was never molested, and continued to grow less morose.

She was an expert at all work pertaining to the forest. The first spring that she was with us, she began about March to talk about "tapping" the maple trees for sap to make maple-sugar. This was something my father and mother knew nothing about, but they

were quite willing to give Sallie permission to work as she would.

First the girl searched out some basswood and ash logs—either would serve her purpose, and they were at that time lying around thickly—and cut them into lengths of about two feet (hard work had made Sallie strong and agile), and with a hatchet she hollowed out each piece of log, leaving a margin at each end until it formed a trough which would hold about five or six quarts of sap.

Next, out of basswood saplings, she made spouts, or spiles, as they were generally called, about a foot in length.

When everything was in readiness she— I at her heels—walked over a certain area in the forest, cutting a notch on the south side of each sugar-maple tree with a sharp axe. She knew the sugar-maple from the other varieties of maple by its bark, it being divided into larger grooves, while the bark on the others was finer and smoother in its divisions.

Inserting the basswood spiles into the notches she had made in the trees, she placed a trough under each one.

At the close of each day the troughs had

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to be emptied, for when the sap ran freely a trough filled within twenty-four hours. Sometimes Sallie and I, just for the fun of it, emptied them both morning and evening, and when it rained or snowed we had to go around and empty the water thus caught out of the trough, so as not to have it dilute the sap.

Sallie next hewed a capacious "store-trough" out of a large log, into which was poured the gathered sap.

A fireplace was built of stones, at either end of which crotches were driven into the ground, then a strong pole was laid across, resting on the crotches. On this pole the great sugar-kettles were hung, and a fire was built underneath.

The Indian girl, with what little assistance my small hands could give her, did all the work. Indeed, she gloried in it, and begged my father to allow her to manage everything and she would bring to him the finished product.

The newly gathered sap was put in the largest kettles, which were emptied into smaller ones as it boiled down to greater strength. It simmered more gradually as it progressed, for the nearer sugar it became,

Sallie informed me, the more likely it was to "boil over."

The kettles had often to be skimmed to clear them of impurities, old buds, dried twigs, leaves, which naturally the sap would collect in the woods. Sallie finished this clearing process by breaking an egg into the kettle. The sediment collected in the egg, she said, and formed a scum on the boiling sap.

The first time we entered the wooded grove it seemed like an untrodden expanse of white—no frisking squirrels, no singing birds, absolutely no signs of life that I could discern. It was Sallie who pointed out to my wondering eyes the little hieroglyphics in the snow made by the chickadee's feet, and the tiny markings where the wild rabbits had frolicked by the light of the moon, and the sweeping script where a fox had shot athwart the white sheet in the direction of a hen-house.

The Englishman made us frequent visits, straddling before our blazing fire, with his eyes sometimes dreamily following the course of the blue smoke which rose in curls among the leafless trees, and sometimes watching Sallie's movements, as she flitted hither and

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thither like a great red bird among the trees, her home-made flannel frock having been dyed a beautiful crimson with pokeberry juice by my beauty-loving mother.

"Those Indians are God's aristocracy," he said to me once, or perhaps to himself, when the girl went off for a fresh pail of sap. "Know more by instinct—what the Almighty has put naturally into their heads—than most white people gain by years of study. This girl is a born sugar-maker."

The whole work of sugar-making was delightful, and Sallie and I never tired of it. We had to "gather sap," "tend kettles," and "feed fires." The crow was wheeling and cawing over our heads, and the blue-bird's sweet wild note was issuing from unseen nooks, by the time the sap began to drop slowly, and finally stop.

"Sugaring-off" day was Sallie's day of triumph. Her final test as to whether the boiling liquid had turned to sugar was to pour a few spoonfuls on a lump of packed snow. If it cracked like a piece of glass when struck with the finger-nail, it was ready to pour into moulds.

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When Sallie would make "flour sugar," she kept stirring the liquid until it was perfectly cool; and it was then loose, and in appearance much like brown sugar bought at the store.

She carried her first cake, weighing eight or ten pounds, proudly to the house, and laid it before father and mother.

"Oh, Salvation!" exclaimed father, "you have achieved something, for sure!"

Something about our employment in the woods aroused the ancestral love of the wild in Sallie, and when the sap no longer ran, she would wander with me in the evening, a lighted hickory torch in her hand, in search of the cow.

The cow was not generally far away, but Sallie would "make believe" she was lost to have the privilege of wandering the woods with that lighted hickory torch in search of her. If we saw the cow in close proximity to us, we would pretend not to see her, and branch off in another direction, wildly waving our torch, and crying, "Where can that cow have gone to?"

Of course, this was only permissible in

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winter, or in the rainy spring and fall seasons, for in summer great precautions had to be taken to prevent "bush fires."

One evening we got beside ourselves with our frolic, and wandered farther from home than we knew. It suddenly became much darker, and our small torch made but a faint glimmer in the great ocean of blackness. To make a short cut toward home, we struck into the stump-field owned by Highland Malcolm, and quite far from any residence. The trees had been taken from this field, and only the great stumps were remaining.

About this time we heard piercing the night air melodious modulations of bugle-like sounds, and we knew that my mother, fearing that we had lost our way, was blowing her long tin dinner-horn to guide us in the direction of home.

When we had reached about the middle of the stump-field we heard a long, heavy, blood-curdling howl not far distant from us, and grasping me, Sallie cried:

"Wolves! wolves! Peter Paul! And a pack, too; I knows the sound!"

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There was a silver birch tree in the middle of the stump-field, which because of its beauty Highland Malcolm's poetic nature had not allowed him to cut down, a young, slender, willowy thing; and half-carrying, half-dragging me, Sal struck out for the birch tree. The wolves had scented our tracks, and their howls were drawing nearer.

We reached the tree all out of breath, and lifting me up as high as she could against it, Sal cried:

"Catch on, Peter Paul; catch on! an' climb—climb for your life! Get away up as far as you can—climb! climb! Hold on fast an' the wolves can't get *you*."

While she was talking she was shoving me away up the tree, which was bending under my weight.

"Climb up the tree yourself, Sallie!" I cried. "Climb up yourself—the wolves will get *you*!"

"No," said Sallie, "the tree will not bear two. *You* little, *I* big; *you* live, *I* die."

When I, with tears and cries, protested against this, she added:

"Poor Injun girl! No one very sorry

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but your fadder an' your mudder, Peter Paul. Climb—climb, good boy! good boy, climb!"

Forced along by her strong hand, I clambered up the tree until I was safely seated on the highest branch that would bear my weight.

The howls were drawing nearer.

"Hold on to tree, no matter what happens to *me*," cried Sal. "I'll place my back to the birch an' fight the wolves with my torch as long as I can. If wolves eat Sallie, Peter Paul, never mind; hang on tight to tree!"

We could hear the pants of the creatures now; they were very near.

I screamed with fright, and strained my eyes into the darkness trying to see them; but the awful blackness obscured everything.

My screaming was timely, however, for suddenly through the thick curtain of darkness I saw a gleam of torches; then I heard a sound of running feet, and presently shots were fired, and a few seconds later my father and the Englishman stood at the foot of the tree.

They had heard the wolves abroad, and knowing that Sallie and I had not returned, they set out with torches and guns to find us.

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Guided by my screams and Sallie's torch, they reached the tree in which I was safely lodged, and against which Sallie had braced herself for her terrible struggle, just as the wolves arrived; indeed, one had already made a snatch at Sallie's skirt, and torn it almost off her person.

The wolves fled, all that were not shot, and the men gathered quickly around the Indian girl.

"Where is Peter Paul?" cried two very frightened voices.

The girl, too exhausted to command her voice, pointed up into the tree; and the Englishman, taking in the situation, said again:

"Those Indians are God's aristocracy!"

Why need I tell of our home-going and mother's joy and gratitude? I presume it was much the same that it would be in any other house, where an only child had been snatched from the jaws of a cruel death.

"Sallie must never be parted from us," said mother, when she could use her voice. "Henceforth she belongs to us, to love and care for."

CHAPTER V

THE COMING OF JOE TOWN

SOMETIMES the roughness and the loneliness, the awful forest gloom, seemed to smite mother's soul with regret for having left the Old Land. At such times father would say to her, "Look at these hundreds of unoccupied acres all about us, Teresa. This is going to be a great country, and we are going to be in at its making. Light and space," he continued, waving his arms all around him, "light and space, where one has room to breathe, and dream, and expand."

Then mother would dry her tears and look round her wonderingly.

At other times the loneliness seemed to have a peculiar charm for my mother, and she would cry, "Isn't it delightful, Thaddeus, to be here by ourselves, feeling the silences and spaces of the great forest, companioning with the peace-radiating trees, the tolerant wild things, and the blue dome of Heaven?"

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It was after one of mother's attacks of the blues that father brought her home, from some distant market, material for her first calico frock, a sort of lilac in colour, and costing one dollar and a quarter per yard. Mother made it up herself, patterning it after her silk wedding frock which had been made in India. She was quite inexperienced in the work of cutting and fitting, and she had to rip the silk frock apart, and cut the calico one exactly like it. Then the two frocks had to be sewn together again.

More calico had to be bought, for 'Lizabeth Hannah Slater discovered that my mother was not sufficiently provided with bed-clothes to keep the family warm through the cold season, and she gave instructions as to the colours that should be purchased for the making of quilts. As soon as the calico arrived at our house, she came over to stay a fortnight, and set about cutting it into "blocks," "stars," "half-moons," and "basket-patterns." This part of the work accomplished, she proceeded to sew the pieces together in contrasting shades—red and green, yellow and purple, pink and white. One

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specially grand quilt, consisting of pink stars on a white ground, was made for the "spare bed." When the "best" quilts were finished—which meant the quilts for the spare bed, or guest chamber—'Lizabeth Hannah "pieced" quilts from remnants of worn-out garments—discarded coats, trousers, skirts; indeed, everything that could be cut into a "block" or a "border."

When the piecing was all done, 'Lizabeth Hannah said it would be necessary to have a "quilting-bee" and a "dance."

Mother demurred about the quilting-bee and the dance, saying that she was a stranger among the people, but 'Lizabeth Hannah said that the neighbours would "take it as an offence" if they heard that she had pieced quilts and did not follow the work by a quilting-bee and dance.

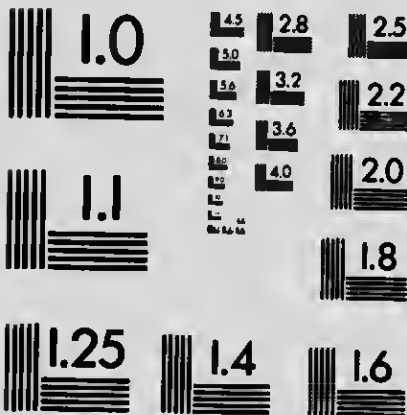
"They'll say you are proud, or do not think they can quilt well enough to suit you," she declared.

A week after this remark of 'Lizabeth Hannah's, the quilting-bee came off. She had given a "bid" to all the women over an area of twenty miles, and they all came.



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The web of patchwork was stretched over a lining and sewed into a large square frame; then rows of women facing inward sat around the frame, the right hand of each working with a needle on top of the web, while the left hand controlled the work beneath it. Very soon "snake-fences," "stars," "bars," "clover-leaves," "hearts," and "rings" began to be outlined with white stitches on the surface of the patchwork web.

When night came a number of young men made their appearance at our home, and the dance followed. As there was no fiddler present—Highland Malcolm being laid up with the "rheumatics," and Jacob Cloud being off on a journey to another district—'Lizabeth Hannah played the jews' harp for the dancers. When she grew tired, Mrs. Macfarlane "lilted" the tune, and to relieve her Alec Macfarlane, who chanced to be at the dance—some of the company whispered that it was because Mary Martha Slater was there—whistled for the dancers.

After the quilting-bee and dance were over, mother began the plaiting of braids for the making of our summer hats. 'Lizabeth

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Hannah Slater had selected from the sheaves of wheat, the fall before, the straw most suitable for braiding, and she gave a large parcel to mother. The qualities required in the straw were smoothness and whiteness. The straws were cut in even lengths, and placed in a dish of water to become soft and pliable before the work of braiding began. For our everyday hats the straw was used whole, but for our Sunday hats it was split.

The splitting was done by running the tine of a small fork down the tube, laying open the straw from top to bottom. This was divided into even strands with the fingers.

To a boy the strange world of the woods presented many compelling charms during those first years. Through the daytime I was usually engaged in some little industrial interests—gathering chips for the fire and to make mosquito smudges, turning the grindstone for father when he would whet his hook, helping mother search for and gather the eggs. But night came, when materialistic things could be thrown aside; then my soul

leaped free to revel in the mysterious and intangible. Fairies and goblins took possession of the world as soon as it became dark for us.

I could not have told who had taught me to believe that a fairy had a home under every large leaf that covered the ground; that they danced among the flowers and grasses every moonlight night; that strange communings went on among the trees every time the wind stirred their branches and set them whispering.

I had comrades among the squirrels, chipmunks, groundhogs; indeed, every flying, running, creeping thing that found a haunt in the forest. One wild thing, however, stood pre-eminently first on my list of friends: this was a great white crane which daily hovered around a marshy spot not very many rods from our house. He would stand for an hour at a time on a large flat stone in the midst of the swamp, wink at me, apparently never moving his long, slender legs, or queer, grotesque, fascinatingly awkward body. Nothing moved but his eyelids. I loved to watch him standing thus in majestic stillness,

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and wonder what he was thinking about. And I loved to see him rise, display all his angularity and awkwardness, softly and solemnly flap his great white wings, and soar away to some unknown haunt of mystery and loneliness. I had an idea that this haunt was a place where the secrets of all hearts were disclosed, and where the bird got all his very great wisdom. I dreamed of this wise bird at night, and told him all my awful secrets in the day time.

"White Crane," I would say in an awed whisper—having an idea that in some way he could hear a whisper, or even know my thought before I spoke—"I did not learn the questions in my catechism to-day that my mother said I was to learn before I came out."

The crane would drop his eyelid in a way I was sure meant reproof.

"I stole two cookies out of the cupboard when she was not looking."

This time the crane dropped both lids.

Shudderingly noticing this, I made up my mind that that sin must be wiped out by confession before my head touched the pillow that night.

Then I would add, "I gathered chips for the smudge, and to help boil the tea-kettle."

The crane stared complacently without dropping a lid, which to my mind signified approval.

"I gathered eggs, and frightened the crows from the corn."

This time the crane tucked one foot under his wing, and balanced himself on the other.

I accepted this as the strongest token of approval I could get.

The crane left for the winter, but looking for me, as I fondly thought, he came back the following spring; and I carried to that silent, austere, almost inanimate-looking biped, as he stood on the flat stone in the midst of the swamp, all my joys and sorrows of that second summer. Indeed, for three summers he was the recipient of my heart secrets.

Another peculiar friend was an old hen partridge which came every day to our back door, with her brood of little chickens, to be fed. She had not learned what an enemy man is to the whole partridge family. "And

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we shall not be the ones to teach her the sad lesson," said my mother.

If Highland Malcolm's dog, which sometimes seemed to prefer our venison bones to those of his own home, suddenly appeared around the corner of the house, the old hen partridge would scurry off into the woods, trying to lead the dog to follow her, while the young brood would throw themselves on their backs, with feet up, in which they held a leaf to cover them from view.

But two or three years of this delightful life was all mother and I were allowed to enjoy; one day there walked into our clearance a man who informed us that he had purchased the hundred acres of land that lay directly to our left.

This land previous to our coming had been settled by a squatter, and a log hut built thereon, but we learned from some of the settlers that the squatter had become discontented and sold his property for an axe and a pair of Indian blankets.

This new man walked in now and claimed to be the owner. Thus Joe Town, a dark, incomprehensible, "devil-may-care sort of

fellow," as I heard father describe him to another, became our nearest neighbour. Indeed, his house was not far from our own.

Our faithful and much-loved dog, Clinch, was found dead in our dooryard the morning after Joe arrived, which fact made father shake his head and look very mysterious.

Something about Joe at once fascinated me; I could scarcely say I liked the man, but he seemed to exercise a strange power over me. Not more than twenty-five, he loved the daring, the unusual, the lawless, in a way that to me was very romantic; and before many weeks had elapsed I spent most of my time in his company. I had suddenly grown too old for conferences with the crane.

Mother did not seem to like this very well; she did not actually forbid my going with the man, but she always looked troubled, as if she saw and felt what she could not utter.

Joe seemed to like my company, too, probably because he never made friends with the older people, and must have someone,

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and invited me to accompany him on many little hunting excursions and tramps through the forest. He tramped miles, I at his heels, finding out where every farmer lived, and exactly how many miles lay between each farm and his place.

"Why doesn't that fellow, Joe Town, go to work and clear up his land, sow some seed, and make a little money for himself?" said father.

The next time I saw Joe I repeated to him what father had said.

For reply he laughed, shrugged his shoulders, and said, "I intend to make money, Pete"—he always shortened up my name in that fashion, much to mother's disgust—"you kin kalkilate on that! An' when I do," he added, "this hanged wilderness ain't a-goin' to hold me long!"

"How are you going to make it, Joe?" I promptly demanded.

"Oh, ye'll find that out in time, youngster," he returned. Then looking sharply at me, and meditating a few moments—indeed, so long that I cried almost in alarm, "Joe, what are you staring at me that way for? What

are you thinking about?"—he said, "I'd like well to hev you fer a pardner" (Joe always put a "c" in place of a "t" in that word), "an' ef it wus not fer that mother o' yourn, I'd make ye one quick. Ye wouldn't need to put on the saint. That face o' yourn would fool the very divil himself."

These words were very incomprehensible to me, but, question as I would, I could not get anything more intelligible out of Joe.

When it would seem that my interest in him was waning, he would devise something new for my entertainment.

Father was so very busy with his various farming interests that he could not take me on many exciting expeditions, but Joe seemed always free to go. He kept two dogs, "Choke" and "Blood."

"Why did you call them such queer names?" I remarked. "I don't like those names."

"Ah, Pete, them names mean a lot. It will be choke or blood every time them dogs take a holt," said Joe with a peculiar leer. "I mean to train them to match their names."

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They're great names, youngster!" And he laughed in a way that made me feel uncomfortable.

One autumn day he and I were travelling through the woods; he was carrying a gun, and we had wandered many miles from home, when he discovered some coarse black hair on a log.

"A bear! A bear, Pete!" he cried. "Show yer mettle now! I always wanted to find out what stuff was in ye, Pete, in case ye was pushed. Now I'll hev a chance to see!" His eyes had a glitter in them which almost frightened me.

With this he plunged in hot pursuit of the bear, I at his heels. Choke and Blood, furiously barking, were tearing ahead of us.

After running until out of breath, following the dogs which were smelling tracks, we saw a great black bear, about fifty yards ahead of us.

"Pick up some stones, Pete, an' run up an' let fling at him," said Joe; "then he will climb a tree."

At that time I did not know what a very dangerous experiment that was, and imme-

diately snatching up the stones, I ran forward throwing them, not knowing that the bear thus annoyed might turn on me.

For an instant the brute turned and seemed inclined to do so. Joe cried, "Take to your heels, youngster; take to your heels, or ye're a goner!" Providentially at that moment another impulse seized the bear, and he ran for a tree.

It was a dead tree up which the great creature hugged his way, and having reached a height of twenty or thirty feet, he lay close, and evidently felt secure.

We were near a settler's place, and a woman came out to tell us that a bear had been stealing her corn, and that she would assist us in any way she could to capture him. The day was dull, a slight mist was falling, and in the dense forest it was rather dark to see.

"If I could see him well," said Joe, "I'd soon put somethin' into him." And he proceeded to put a heavy load of balls and slugs into "Old Bess," as he called his gun, saying, "If this does not kill the bear, it will bust the gun, so we will have *some* fun."

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The woman, taking a rail off the fence that enclosed her garden patch, set fire to one end of it; then, holding up the burning rail so as to throw light on the bear, she cried:

"Now fire away, stranger!"

"I have nothin' to rest my gun on," said Joe, drawing much nearer the tree to which the bear was clinging. "Come here, Pete, an' let me rest this blunderbuss on yer shoulder!"

"You'll do nothin' o' the kind with that boy," cried the pioneer woman. "Your gun is overloaded, and like enough to bust, as you said yourself, an' kill him. Then, if it don't, the bear might in a rage jump down on him, standin' so near that tree."

"Come, Pete; don't be a snivellin' coward," said Joe.

"I'll not hold this rail if you rest your gun on that boy's shoulder," said the woman determinedly.

"He's not yer child," said Joe; "the world's full o' boys. Come on, Pete. I dare you!"

With that I went. Somehow I believe I would have gone if I were sure it meant death.

The woman threw down her burning rail, and clasped both hands to her face.

The gun was placed on my shoulder, aimed at the bear, and, as Providence would have it, it went off all right, and the bear, with the various charges in his body, fell heavily to the ground.

“Merciful God!” cried the woman; “is the boy alive? May I never be a party to sech doin’s agen. Sonny,” she added, “don’t never do that agen, *never*. He’s a cruel one to ast you to do it. You’re too good a-lookin’ boy to be throwed away fer a man like him.”

“He’ll do more’n that yet,” said Joe, laughing loud and long.

The bear was hauled into the settler’s shed—with the promise that she was to have some of the meat, which all the pioneers knew was like the tenderest of beef—until Joe could go home for the appliances to skin it, and haul it away.

On the way home he commended my bravery, and said mysteriously, “Ye’ll do, Pete; ye’ll do. I alwas wanted to find out whether ye’d do.”

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"Do for what?" said I.

"To be my helpmeet," he replied with a grim smile. "With Choke and Blood, an' you, I think I could dare anythin.' We'd never be caught alive, would we, Pete? Tell yer mother nothin' 'bout this, youngster, *mind.*"

"If your gun had burst and killed me that time, Joe, what would you have told mother?"

"Told her ye shot yerself, ye little divil!" returned Joe, while a hard look crept into his face. "Or pertend that ye left me an' got lost in the bush, an' the wild beasts had et ye up."

Somehow Joe was out of humour, and more than usually ugly.

"If Joe ever swears in your presence, Peter Paul," my mother had said, "you must never go with him again."

This I had told Joe, and I believe he often swallowed bad words just as he was about to utter them rather than lose me. This time he made a curious gurgling sound in his throat, as if something wanted to come out and he choked it back.

I said nothing, but coming in time to a turn in the road which led down, I knew, to the Englishman's place, I suddenly dropped away from Joe and ran down this road.

He called loudly for me to come back, but I ran all the faster, and never stopped until I had reached the small log house for which I was running.

Shortly after this a company of Indians that had camped for some time in the most heavily wooded part of the peninsula had decided that they would move their camp to another locality. But there was an old squaw too feeble by reason of her great age to follow the camp. Learning the condition of things, and that she was the one hindrance to the progress of the tribe, she requested her people to shoot her.

The men of the company took the poor old woman at her word, and went around the surrounding country inviting the white people to witness the shooting, and be present at the burial, in imitation of the invitation to funerals which they had seen their white neighbours give.

There was not much enforcement of

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law at the time, and it was thought better not to interfere with the Indians, but the invitation to witness the shooting was ignored by the white population in the settlement.

But Joe whispered sharply into my ear, when the subject was being talked over on the highway by a group of farmers: "I'm goin', Pete; do ye want to come?" I knew this was an attempt of Joe to win my favour again, and although I did not intend to reinstate him, I was so curious to see the tragedy that I whispered an assent.

The day we started out we carried each a tin bucket on our arm, on the pretext of looking for wild grapes in the woods; the shooting of the old squaw, after the first shock the intelligence gave the white community, seemed to have passed completely out of their minds.

We walked through woods, up hill and down dale, stepping over roots and boulders, clambering over fallen trees, wedging through the thick undergrowth, painfully skirting the slimy sloughs, now over the shoes in mud, now up to the knees in water. We crossed

the tamarack muskeg on logs set lengthwise, sometimes a distance apart, Joe walking before me in great strides, I straining every muscle to keep up to him.

"Don't slip off a log, Pete," he called back to me, "or make a miss-step, or ye'll plunge into the swampy mud an' water up to yer waist, an' p'raps up to yer neck. An' it's full o' black snakes, an' lizards, an' toads, an' snails, an' all other creepin' things; don't ye be a little fool an' slip off."

When we reached more solid ground, Joe found a nest of partridge's eggs. Drawing out his pocket-knife, on the blade of which was engraved the words, "Warranted to strike fire," he found a brownish, velvety substance in an old rotting stump which he called "spunk," and striking a spark with his knife into the spunk, he soon had a fire, and he cooked the eggs in the hot ashes.

We ate those eggs, and afterwards I felt a good deal better able to keep up with Joe's long strides.

In time we reached the camp of Indians, and we found them just about to begin the ceremony.

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At the appointed hour a feeble, white-haired old crone, reclining in a home-made seat, was carried into the middle of the circle of her people. Then one of the men stepped out from the throng and crooned a curious dirge-like song. It was weird and eerie. My scalp seemed to rise, and there were strange creepings up and down my backbone. Then another man, brandishing a long wand, pointed to the sun, gibbered and gesticulated, then he, too, withdrew. Several other men followed him, and did much as he did. Another dirge was chanted, and a warrior stepped from the circle, aimed at the old grey head, fired a shot—and all was over.

"Tell your mother nothin' 'bout this, Pete," said Joe when we were on the road home. "Ye must learn not to blab everythin' ef we are goin' to hev any fun."

I greatly wondered at this advice, but said nothing.

That night I screamed in my sleep, and had to be taken from my bed and held for half an hour on my father's knee.

"Look," said my mother, "he is trembling so much that he is actually shaking your

knee, Thaddeus! What can be the matter with the child?"

For two or three following nights this frightened scream awakened the family, and by that time my mother was dosing me with various kinds of herbs.

"If I could only tell her!" was my anguished thought. "But what would Joe Town do to me?"

On the fourth day of my suffering I was walking alone in the woods, and all at once the sprites in under the great leaves of the skunk-cabbage and May-apple began to whisper softly, as if not to let Joe Town or anyone else hear:

"Tell your mother! Tell your mother!"

The leaves on the giant trees, whom I had never considered very great friends of mine, condescended to give the same advice.

A wild goose sailing over my head in the blue commanded harshly:

"Go tell her! Go tell her! Go tell her!"

A cricket in the grass, in a sort of trill, rasped:

"Tell-her! Tell-her! Tell-her!"

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A crow cawed :

"Tell! Tell! Tell!"

The high, sharp voice of a blue-jay cried :

"Tell! Tell! Tell!"

Out on the Chippewa Creek a wild duck squawked the word, and a loon shrieked it.

Then a little song-bird perched on a limb not far above my head sang sweetly :

"Peter Paul, tell your mother! Peter Paul, tell your mother!"

The voice of that gentle bird settled the question. I went right home, and, finding my mother alone, I fell on my knees, buried my face in her lap, and between sobs told her the story of the shooting of the old squaw.

My mother clasped me in her arms and said, "The idea of taking a child to see such a horror! Joe Town must never be allowed to take my little boy on any more excursions from home!"

After that confession, I screamed no more out of my sleep, and the sudden passing away of the old squaw faded from my memory.

CHAPTER VI

WHAT HAPPENED AT THE RAISING

IT was the Englishman who offered a plot on which to build a school-house, and enough trees out of his forest to furnish logs.

A number of men were invited to form a bee to chop down the trees, and Jacob Cloud, tall and sinewy, was with unanimous consent appointed to superintend the job.

When the large logs were ready, a day was appointed for the raising, and the choppers gathered, this time carrying pike-poles over their shoulders.

I was up early that morning and persuaded mother to allow me to accompany father to the raising, on condition that I would keep well out of the way of a possible falling log. I stood off from the scene of activity as far as my mother had stipulated, and looking on from the outside I saw a great many things not seen by the others.

Among the arrivals at the raising was

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Highland Malcolm, dressed in his kilts, which he loved to wear when the weather would permit. He was driving a small ox-cart, and coming up near to where I was, he cried in stentorian voice :

“ Whoa, Brindle ! ”

The yoked animal came to a standstill, and his master climbed out of the cart and lifted out a large stone jar.

While Brindle bowed his neck and began to gratify his appetite by nibbling the luscious green grass at his feet, his master, glancing furtively around, raised the jar to his lips and gratified *his* appetite by two great swallows.

Wiping his mouth on the sleeve of his shirt, he looked toward the company of men already assembled a short distance from him, and shouted :

“ Here, Boss, iss the sperrits ! ”

Thereupon the Englishman, who was the master of ceremonies, came and took charge of the jar ; and looking around, as if to see that no one was watching him, he carried it some distance, and hid it behind a clump of low bushes.

"There, Peter Paul," he half whispered, having discovered that I had followed at his heels, "don't tell anyone where this jar is; some of those fellows would find it, and after that we'd get little work out of them."

After the men had worked an hour, and were covered with sweat and glory, having lodged every log in place without a hitch, at a sign from Jacob Cloud, which I as well as the Englishman caught, the latter walked off into the woods, I after him, until he came to the place where the stone jar was secreted.

Taking it from under the bushes, he carried it to a small spring where the water gushed out of the rock in a little jet, and allowed a quantity to run into it. Then, shaking the jar thoroughly, he said, whether to me or to himself I did not know:

"It is better not to give it to those fellows too strong; logs have to be handled with level heads."

Then going back to the company of men, he passed the jar to Highland Malcolm, and the latter, with a small tin cup in his hand, went around from man to man and gave each

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a cupful. "Long Tom" begged hard for two cupfuls, but was refused. Even the one excited him to such an extent that he burst out in high cracked voice: "*Hi diddle diddle, the cat's in the fiddle!*" Someone clapped a hand over his mouth and stopped the song at the end of the first line.

When Highland Malcolm had thus waited on the men, he withdrew to one side, helped himself to a cupful, and was re-corking the jar, when I, feeling my personality, and wondering why I should be neglected, cried:

"I want some, Highland Malcolm."

He looked at me in a startled way, and I think he turned a shade paler, and said quickly:

"No, Peter Paul; it iss not for children at all, not at all!"

Then he turned his back to the company of men and helped himself to another half tin-cupful, saying meanwhile: "If you would make up your mind, Peter Paul, never to touch sperrits, either as child or man, it would be a wise thing."

"Why do you take it, Highland Malcolm?" I ASKED.

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He turned paler, this time I was sure, and a sort of shiver shook his heavy form, and he said: "Oh, child, it iss because it iss in my blood, in my blood! My grandfather—my father—dear—dear——!" He broke off suddenly, and I felt that I should ask no more questions.

The Englishman had caught a glimpse of Highland Malcolm taking his second cupful, and hastening up to his side, he took charge of the jar and, still accompanied by me, carried it back to its hiding-place.

The log building grew, and it came to the point of putting on the top log, when Jacob Cloud, the master workman, proposed a rest.

While the men threw themselves down on the grass and old leaves bestrewing the ground, Jacob wandered off into the woods.

He was gone about ten minutes, when something suddenly seized the Englishman, and jumping from the log on which he was seated, he rushed in the direction of the secreted jar of spirits, I running after him.

When we had nearly reached the place, we met Jacob coming from it.

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He was very jolly, snatched me up, and tossed me over his head, imitated the scream of a bird which flew over our heads, and was so very funny that I laughed aloud. The Englishman, I noticed, did not laugh, nor even smile ; indeed, there was a heavy frown on his brow.

We turned and walked back with Jacob until we reached the company of men seated on the ground. Jacob joined them, but the Englishman walked past them on into the woods on the other side, as if he wanted to be alone to think. I was at his side, and stooping he took my hand, and continued to walk in silence.

After awhile, he said in such a low tone I could scarcely catch the words: "Jacob has found out where I had the spirits hidden. He's been drinking it, and now we'll have no head to finish the building. It is not safe for him to attempt to put up those top logs."

While he was yet talking we heard behind us, in loud, almost jocular tones:

"Ahoy, there! Ahoy! Ahoy! Send her up, boys! Send her up!"

The Englishman stopped his quick walk, turned red, then white, and said agitatedly : " They're putting up another log, and Jacob's not fit for it—not fit for it ! "

He turned and strode rapidly back, I running to keep pace with him.

Just before we rounded a clump of trees which hid the new building from sight, we heard a hoarse cry of distress in a chorus of men's voices, and like a solo rising above the chorus a piercing cry of pain. The Englishman threw up his hand and started to run, and when we reached the men we found that the log which they had been joyously lifting to the top of the building had slipped. Jacob Cloud, on whom so much had been depending, had suddenly relaxed his effort, allowed his pike-pole to slip, and the consequence was the heavy log had fallen, the end of it striking and crushing Jacob's leg.

Intermittent with Jacob's moans and cries of pain there arose from him the bitter lament : " I'll never be best man at a raisin' again ! I'll never be best man at a raisin' again ! "

Turning to me, the Englishman said in a

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low voice, "Sonny, do you think you could find that jar of spirits, and carry it here to me? You are the only one who knows where it is; and it will not be so heavy as it was a while ago."

"I can get it," I cried joyfully, feeling proud of being entrusted with a message of importance. And while the Englishman hastened away for his surgical instruments, I ran as fast as my feet could carry me in the direction of the hidden jar.

Pulling it out from under the bushes, I carried it a yard or two, then, panting for breath, I laid it down. I dragged it over the ground for a space, and again lifting it, I carried it a few yards. Oh, oh, my heart was almost breaking with the thought or fear of failure, when I saw my mother coming to my help. I would have resented the help of anyone else, but not that of mother. She picked up the jar and carried it easily to within a short distance of the group of men; then, as if she read my heart, and knew how earnestly I longed to be the Englishman's helpmeet, she said: "Here, Peter Paul, you take the jar now." I put both arms around

it, while she held the handle, bearing the weight; and thus we presented it to the Englishman, as he returned at that moment with the required instruments.

On close examination of Jacob's injuries, the Englishman decided that the leg must be amputated below the knee. Immediately the men went to work with saw and hammer to make a long table on which the operation could be performed. The patient was carried tenderly to my father's house, as that was much nearer the scene of the accident than any other.

No anæsthetics were in use at that time, and all that could be done to assuage poor Jacob's agony was to stupefy him with spirits.

When everything was in readiness for the operation to begin, mother, pale with nervous dread, took me by the hand and hurried me off down a forest path. Half a dozen men seized hold of poor Jacob and tried to hold him steady while the operator cut the ligaments and sawed the bone of the shattered limb. We could hear his cries even off in the wood, and mother, clasping her hands

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over her ears to drown the dreadful sound, said to herself, it seemed to me :

“What a pity it is that spirits are a necessity at a raising !”

Then she quickly brought both hands down from her ears, excitedly grasped my two hands, and said, “Peter Paul, I, the mistress of the House on the Hill-top, ought to be there ready to render any assistance called for ! I am quite ashamed of myself ; you are a child, Peter Paul, and had better stay here until I come for you, but *I* must return.”

But I begged hard to be allowed to accompany her, and poor mother did not seem to have enough of nerve left to resist me, therefore I was let have my own way. So I was in for the tying of the arteries and the binding up of the wound.

How my heart throbbed, and my nerves quivered, as I watched the Englishman work ! I determined that when I became a man I should be able to cut off legs, and do everything else that the world might require.

The Englishman's most efficient helper

was Highland Malcolm. Quick-witted, sympathetic, strong, he almost held the poor sufferer in his arms during the trying ordeal. But when it was all over he was pale and almost prostrated.

"That's the Celtic in him," said my mother, "that can rise to heights, and sink to depths."

All at once Highland Malcolm became an interesting character to me, and I determined to watch him. I followed him when he crept out of the house a few moments afterward to see whether I could find out what that thing "Celtic" was. I saw him find the jar of whisky which had been thrown down into the grass after a quantity had been taken out to serve as a sedative to poor Jacob's nerves. He eagerly seized the jar, raised it to his lips, and drank a deep and prolonged draught. It affected him quickly, and he started off home through the woods shouting like a wild man. Every few yards he would pause and apparently reflect, saying to himself quietly, "This is the conduct of a barbarian." But in a few moments he would whoop again.

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Two or three days afterward I was out looking for a straying cow, and hearing a voice in a secluded spot in the woods, I drew near and saw Highland Malcolm kneeling beside a great hemlock tree, his face turned heavenward ; while up through the mist and interlacing branches, the song of birds and the balm of a thousand flowers there pierced his cry of repentance :

“ My days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth. My heart iss smitten and withered like grass ; so that I forget to eat my bread. By reason off the voice off my groanings my bones cleave to my skin. I am like a pelican off the wilderness ; I am like an owl off the desert. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house-top. For I haf eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping ! ”

I stole away on tiptoe, thinking that Highland Malcolm was even a more mysterious creature than I had imagined—although mother’s words had led me to believe that he was something out of the ordinary—when he could eat ashes like bread.

Half an hour after I had seen him in the

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secret place of the woods, I heard the skirlings of his bagpipes echoing through the aisles of the trees. It was his habit when he felt reinstated after one of his outbreaks to express his exuberance of spirits, or his thankfulness, by walking through the forest playing his pipes.

So possessed was I with a desire to know why Highland Malcolm should have gone into the heart of the woods to say his prayers, that I screwed up my courage to tell him that I had seen and heard him. But all the explanation he gave was :

“I want ta be a gude man, little Peter Paul ; th’ spirit iss wullin’, but th’ flesh iss weak.”

Was it shame because of his wild outlandish conduct while under the influence of his “drop too much” that caused Highland Malcolm’s repentance, rather than the fact that he had been drinking whisky ? Because at that time it was thought nothing improper for a man to drink all he could walk around under. Was he asking the Almighty to forgive him for having made himself appear so ridiculous ?

CHAPTER VII

SCHOOL IN THE BUSH

WHILE poor Jacob Cloud was waiting for his leg to heal, the school-house progressed. A roof was put on, and frames were made for the windows. Some of the men from practice had become quite deft at carpenter-work. Neil Campbell killed a hog, and the membrane found in the hog's lard, the larger pieces of it, were carefully fitted into the window-frames to serve as glass.

A large fireplace had been built across the entire end of the school-house, and the cracks between the logs, where they did not fit tightly together, were "chinked" with mud. Seats were made of large trees split in two, with the flat side left uppermost. Pegs were driven in the round side to serve as feet for the seats. These long benches were very heavy, and when one of them was accidentally overturned during school hours, it was as diverting and nerve-shocking as an earth-

quake. Holes were left in the wall, into which pins were driven to support other split trees, flat side up, to serve as desks. The pupils sitting at these desks had to face the wall, their backs to the teacher, so there was small chance for any of the pleasant frolics behind desks which brighten the school hours of the present-day pupil.

When the school-house was completed, it was unanimously decided, by those interested, that the matter of engaging a teacher should be left entirely to the Englishman, as he had given the lot for the building. In due time one was engaged ; and he went around from house to house soliciting pupils. Two dollars per term were the fees for each pupil, and the teacher was to "board around" in their homes.

For my first appearance at school mother dressed me in my best homespun suit, and fastened around my neck a white linen collar—the latter was seldom seen on anybody in the settlement except on Sundays. I had been denied very little that I wanted in my life, and no one had ever spoken harshly to me ; so it was without fear that I sallied

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forth, the first day of school, to meet the new schoolmaster.

I walked proudly and confidently toward the school-house, lifted the wooden latch, and entered. The Master was standing beside his desk at the rear of the schoolroom, and walking directly up to him, I said :

" I am Peter Paul Thornton ; I have come to be one of your pupils."

The Master glared at me, then sat down and took a pinch of snuff.

He kept glaring until I began to feel uneasy. Then he pointed to a seat and said :

" Sit there, Peter Paul Thornton." Then he took another pinch of snuff.

" Bring a quill pen to-morrow, Peter Paul Thornton," was his next remark to me, after another period of glaring. Then he took another pinch of snuff. An important part of a teacher's duty was to sharpen quill pens, and " set copies " for the pupils. "*A penny saved is a penny earned,*" and "*Honesty is the best policy,*" were the " copies " I had the first days of school. The Master could write a " beautiful hand," so he paid more

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attention to handwriting than to any other branch of study.

That evening my mother procured from a grey goose's wing a large quill. The tip was cut off, and one side stripped bare. It was then boiled in milk, and afterwards dried and hardened in hot ashes. Then with a sharp knife the quill was pointed, and the point split into two legs. 'Lizabeth Hannah Slater had given instructions as to how the whole work of making a quill pen should be done.

That first day the Master did little else than glare at the pupils and take pinches of snuff.

The second day he was putting some of the boys to sit with the girls, who occupied the seats on the left side of the schoolroom. On the third day offenders were sent to stand in a corner wearing a "dunce's cap."

The Master's forms of punishment were many. One which he particularly liked was to have a boy down on the floor resting on two hands and one foot, while he held the other foot in the air. In this position the

culprit was expected to study with a book on the floor beneath his face.

Within one short week the Master was vigorously using the "tawse"—a broad leather strap slit in four or five slender fingers at the end.

When I saw the little girls extending small white fingers—to be slapped by the tawse, because they had not spelled a word correctly—how thankful I felt that they were not Ishbel's little white fingers, and that her mother had said she was not going to send her to any school, but was going to teach her herself.

For small offences the tawse was applied to the hands of the offender, but in more serious cases, or when the Master was more out of temper, the tawse was used on the back or shoulders.

Barney McGee, a cheerful Irish lad, who simply could not keep absolutely still more than an hour at a time, seemed to arouse a feeling of antipathy in the mind of the Master almost at first sight, and the latter allowed no opportunity to show it to pass unused.

One day Barney was caught in the awful

sin of "looking off his book." The tawse was snatched from the Master's desk and sent whizzing through the air from one end of the schoolroom to the other, alighting on Barney's shoulder.

The boy looked up in a startled way, and the Master roared:

"Bring that tawse here!"

An instantaneous change from listlessness to energy seized the other members of the school. Eyes which were wandering before became riveted on books, and lips moved quickly in simulated study. Barney walked tremblingly forward, and when he reached the Master's desk he was ordered to place his hand, palm upward, on the lid of the desk. This he did, and the tawse came down with a biting lash on his open palm. Tingling in every nerve, Barney, scarcely knowing what he was doing, snatched up his hand and placed it palm downward. The tawse then came down with a tremendous whack on the *back* of his hand.

It was an unwritten law among the pupils not to mention any of their school grievances at home; somehow it was thought to be

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a sign of weakness or cowardice, and a bush-boy would sooner be killed than be called a coward.

Another form of punishment was to be "kept in." For some unknown reason—people have said since it was because my father at times wore a military uniform—the Master never attempted to thrash me, but I was kept in more than once.

One day I had failed to meet with the Master's approval, and he said with much asperity, "Peter Paul Thornton, remain in after four."

Four o'clock came, and I remained in my seat and watched all the other pupils file out of the narrow door.

The Master then grasped his hat and marched out after them, banging the door.

He had been all day under the influence of "a dram"—a condition quite frequent with him—and may have forgotten that he left me in the school-house. I stayed quietly in my seat for an hour, expecting his return; then less quietly for another hour. I could endure it no longer, and stealing to the door on tip-toe, I lifted the latch, opened the door,

and peeped out cautiously up and down the road that ran past the school-house. My own home was all of six hundred yards away, and to reach it I would have to go past the Master's house. Stepping out of the door, I closed it behind me, dropped down on my hands and knees in the long grass, and crept past the Master's house the six hundred yards to my home.

Whether it was because he was too drunk to remember that he had left me in the school-house, or thought it wise to make believe he had forgotten all about me, I never knew ; he never mentioned the subject to me again.

About this time a letter came across the sea from my grandmother on my mother's side of the house. The first paragraph of that letter had to do with me, therefore it interested me greatly. This is how it ran :

“ DEAR DAUGHTER TERESA,

“ I take my pen in hand to indite an epistle to you. I have many things of importance to say to you, but shall begin with what I think the *most* important,

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namely, the education of your young son, Peter Paul. Daughter Teresa, send the boy to England *at once*, to receive the education befitting his birth. I shudder when I think of the monotony of the life he must be called upon to endure in that new country; that land of little else than trees. It is impossible for him to see or hear anything there, and if you allow him to grow up in such a country and with such surroundings, his intellect will shrivel and dwarf for want of occupation, and in time he will become a hopeless dullard."

"What is the meaning of *monotony*? And what is the meaning of *dullard*?" were the questions I asked my mother after I had heard the letter read.

"Monotony means want of variety," said my mother, "and dullard means a stupid person."

I laughed aloud, she joining with me, at the idea of anyone thinking that there was lack of variety in the bush-world, and that by living in it I would grow up a stupid person.

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A new enthusiasm seized me at that moment ; it was to live so as to let my grandmother see that the "land of little else than trees" could not make me a stupid person. Previous to this the ruling passion of my life had been to conquer the trees, which in great battalions were holding the land ; now there crept into my heart a second ambition, to live side by side with the first, and to influence my life until manhood, sometimes one having supremacy, and sometimes the other.

Mother and father had lengthy talks on the subject and concluded by continuing to send me to the school in the woods of the new country.

In winter-time the school-house was crowded, older boys coming in during the "slack" time to improve their "writin'" and "figurin'." Among the new pupils that first winter were James Bryce and "Long Tom" Jones, two full-grown bearded men, with heavy sinewy arms and fists like oaken mallets.

It soon became evident to the younger pupils that these men were not on good terms. During the first two or three weeks they never

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noticed each other, but one noon hour, when the Master was away home for his dinner, they began disputing; their words soon became hot and angry, and were quickly followed by hotter and angrier blows, the heavy fists striking each other in the face and over the head with thuds that seemed to shake the very earth.

The small boys tip-toed into shivering, white-faced groups, and thus stood looking on at what seemed to them a battle of the giants.

Everyone was so engaged that the return of the schoolmaster was unnoticed until he knocked, as was his wont, with his knuckles, the top part of the lower window-sash. This was his method of "calling school."

We all rushed in immediately and took our seats. The two men, after washing the blood from their faces and brawny hands at the "school pump," also entered the school-room and took their accustomed seats.

There was an ominous silence, and the Master's face was set like iron. The silence lasted but a few moments, although appearing much longer, then the Master called on the

two grown-up culprits to stand forth in front of his desk.

This they did without hesitation. It seemed to be recognised by old and young that a schoolmaster's authority must not be interfered with or resisted, no matter what the age or size of the pupil.

"James Bryce, you were fighting?" said the Master's hard, crisp voice.

"Yes, sir."

"Thomas Jones, you were fighting?"

"Yes, sir."

The Master proceeded to take off his coat, folding it carefully wrong-side out, and laying it across his desk. Then he unbuttoned the wristbands of his shirt and turned them back over his forearm to give his muscles free play to thrash the two men, both of whom were half as large again as himself.

The Master then ordered James Bryce to take off his coat. The grown-up culprit obeyed, only showing that he had reached the estate of manhood by never wincing or uttering a sound when the Master gave him a sound flogging over the shoulders with the tawse.

James Bryce put his coat on and took his

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seat. The Master then turned to the other man and said :

" Thomas Jones, take off your coat."

Thomas obeyed, and received precisely the same punishment meted out to James, with the same spirit of fortitude.

The boys had gaped white-faced and wide-eyed while the giants were receiving their castigation. Most of the girls had buried their faces in their hands to hide tears.

" What makes you so pale and blue in under the eyes ? " cried my mother when I went home from school at four o'clock.

" Are you sick, Peter Paul ? "

" I am not sick," I promptly replied.

" Have you fallen and injured yourself, or has anyone hurt your feelings, son ? " she further inquired, looking closely into my eyes.

I stoutly denied that there was anything the matter with me either physically or mentally, feeling that it was in the highest degree heroic to tell no tales out of school.

The schoolmaster seemed to have a love for thrashing *something*, and between hours of school and on Saturdays he added to his income by thrashing grain for the farmers

with a "flail." The flail consisted of two hard, round, shining sticks about four feet in length, connected at the end by a leather thong. The Master would unbind the sheaves of grain and lay them on the floor of the barn side by side, tops inward. Then he would begin pounding them, the dull monotonous "thud! thud! thud!" sending chills through me every time that I realised it was the schoolmaster I heard thrashing, for my fancy would persist in thinking it was a boy he had under the hard, round, shining sticks.

The first strokes on the thick mass seemed to make little impression, but after many strokes with the flail the mass flattened out. Then the mass was turned over and the pounding repeated on the other side. Finally he shook the grain and chaff from the straw with a fork; and even that act reminded me of the way he used to shake a boy at school after he was done cuffing his ears.

There were no boots or shoes seen at school in summer-time except those worn by the teacher. Mother started me off the first day wearing my shoes and stockings, but the other children looked at me in a way that

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made me think they were pitying me, and I begged my mother to permit me to go barefooted.

At first the soles of my feet were very tender, and I tried to make myself as light as possible on the sharp gravel and sharper stones, but in a few days the skin became thickened and hardened to such a degree as to defy all but the very sharpest attacks. The toes were an exception; these remained tender through all the exposure of wind and weather. Many a time I knocked the skin off my toe against a stone or snag; then, catching the wounded member up with both hands, I would go hopping along until the first keen pain had subsided, after which I would settle down to a jerky walk on one whole foot and the hinder part of the other.

The fact that the boys went to school barefooted and bare-legged beneath the knee furnished much amusement to the Master. He had a lens with which he lighted his pipe in the sun's rays, and it was huge sport for him when the sunlight lay like a great wash of gold on the floor, and a class of reciters were standing with bare feet and legs in that flood

of light, to nip one of the boys' bare legs with his lens and hear him cry out with sudden pain.

The Master was recovering from a rather heavy course of "drammin'," and was very nervous and irritable. One day, when he seemed worse than usual, Barney McGee was detected by him in the act of writing a letter to one of the girls. The Master's wrath was something awful to see. One of the "big" boys was ordered out to stand in the middle of the space before his desk. The work of the school was suspended, all the boys and girls were supposed to look on and take warning by the whipping they were about to witness. Barney walked tremblingly forward at the Master's orders, and was hoisted on the back of the big boy, with his arms around the latter's neck and his legs dangling. All covering was taken from Barney's back and shoulders, and the awful tawse was about to descend, when the door opened and in walked the Englishman. His knock had not been heard with the uproar within.

The Master turned a shade paler at sight of the man to whom he owed his position; then he assumed an air of authority and

requested the Englishman to withdraw and come another day, as he was engaged at that moment in a question of school discipline.

The Englishman stood as if rooted to the ground ; he gazed for some seconds at Barney hoisted on the big boy's back with his shoulder-blades bared for the tawse. Then he glanced at the red, angry face of the Master, and the frightened, pale faces of the boys and girls in their seats. His fair face grew scarlet, and his lips closed together like a vice ; striding forward a couple of yards he lifted Barney from the other boy's back.

" You may both take your seats," he said to the two boys standing before him. Then shoving his hand deeply into his right trousers pocket, he drew out a wallet in which jingled gold pieces ; taking one of the pieces from the wallet he passed it to the Master, saying with the authority of a military general :

" I engaged you to fill the position of teacher in this school ; I now inform you that your services are no longer required. This gold piece is sufficient to cover all arrears in school fees, and carry you out of the neighbourhood."

The Englishman walked to the teacher's desk and took charge of the school, and the Master crushed his hat on his head and walked out of the building. He must have left the neighbourhood immediately, for we never saw him again.

The Englishman continued to be our teacher until a new man was installed.

This new teacher's hobby was spelling. He was not long in his position before he had all the school up in two opposing rows the length of the little log school-house, and they were being bowled over one after another by such words as "phthisic," "phlegmatic," and "phonetic." James Bryce reinstated himself in the eyes of the school, and won fame over an area of fifty miles, by spelling down first the whole school, and afterwards, at a spelling-bee, the whole neighbourhood. He held his head with an air of triumph when "Long Tom" Jones went down the second round on "Mordecai." James Bryce always knew whether it was "niece" or "neice," "dying" or "dyeing," "judgment" or "judgement," "judgship" or "judgeship."

CHAPTER VIII

THE DAYS OF LONG PRAYERS

SOON after the school-house was built religious services were held there occasionally. Sometimes a travelling Methodist preacher, with some stirring text, would make the rafters ring and the log-walls tremble. Sometimes a Presbyterian would roll out psalms in a sonorous voice that seemed to raise the little building off its underpinning.

It was Highland Malcolm who said that it was time the latter, who were much the most numerous of all the church representatives in the neighbourhood, should build a meeting-place of their own.

A meeting of men was called, and before they separated it was decided that the Englishman should be requested to draw up a plan for a church.

"He's a 'Piscopal," cried Neil Campbell.
"I do not approve of askin' *him* til do it!"
But he was voted down. "The truth iss,"

said Highland Malcolm, "there iss not another man in the locality *can* do it."

When the proposition was laid before the Englishman he at once procured a sheet of white birch bark, and prepared some black ink by drawing sap from the red maple and allowing some iron nails to remain in it until it was of the desired degree of blackness. When all was in readiness he began to draw the prospective church.

While the plan was being prepared Highland Malcolm and Neil Campbell travelled the country soliciting subscriptions with the following paper:—

"As Almighty God has been pleased to visit us in the wilderness with the light of the preached Gospel, we think it requisite to build a meeting-house for the more convenient assembling of ourselves together for social worship before the Lord."

In time considerable money was subscribed, and the Englishman presented a beautiful plan, so it was thought proper to begin the building of the church.

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It was completed in midsummer—a square structure, without adornment, and seated with home-made benches. Thenceforward a regular minister was to hold service there every fortnight.

The church was three miles and a half from our home, and we were considered fortunate; some of the congregation had to come fifteen miles.

It was a great pleasure at first to accompany my father along the path through the woods to the new church; invariably on our walk thither, at certain cross-roads, we met Neil Campbell, Highland Malcolm and Jacob Cloud. The latter walked with the assistance of a crutch which he had made himself, and the left leg of his trousers was looped up to the knee. The men would fall into pairs, and talk gravely on very weighty subjects, while I loitered unnoticed behind, shying pebbles at chipmunks and squirrels, softly—so as not to be heard by my father—imitating the birds, and enjoying the colour and form displayed by the flowers and trees.

The Englishman seldom came with us to church.

"It's because he's a 'Piscopal!" snorted Neil Campbell.

"It's because he hass to be out waitin' on the ailin' folk," said Highland Malcolm.

When we who walked to church were about a mile from our destination, we would usually hear someone coming through the woods singing in a high tenor voice, and the following remarks were often evoked by that singing :

"There's that Welsh Singer again," Neil Campbell would say crabbedly. "Seems to me he's o'er gay for the Sawbath."

"That fellow wass born to be a Methody," Highland Malcolm would reply with a little cackling laugh.

"He could not be much waur!" was Neil's rejoinder.

While they were talking there floated to us on the wings of the morning air :

"I to the hills will lift mine eyes,
From whence doth come mine aid."

And in a few seconds the singer himself would emerge from the thicket, bareheaded and

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barefooted, but with the rapture of the song in his face.

He would cease singing when he met us, and joining our company would proceed to the church, where it was his glory and duty to "pitch the tunes."

The Welsh Singer was remonstrated with more than once for coming to church barefooted. On such occasions his reply always was :

"When the Lord made Adam and Eve, he made no boots. I learn by what I read in the Book that all these superfluities came into the world with sin."

He had walked so much barefooted that the soles of his feet had become hard as horn, and he never seemed to feel the snags and roots over which he trod. But his homespun suit of clothes was spotlessly clean, and everyone seemed to forget the bare feet when they once heard the matchless voice winding through the intricacies of some of the old psalm tunes.

When we reached the church father would turn and say, "Peter Paul, take off your hat," taking his own off at the same

time. Then he would, with large hand, brush down my homespun clothes, made of a material which mother had woven herself from wool that had grown on our own sheep's back, made into yarn of her own spinning; smooth back stray locks of my hair, which by a mother's hand had previous to my start been brushed into almost mirror-like smoothness; and taking me by the hand he would lead me up the aisle of the church into one of the front seats—he, being an elder, was expected to sit in a front seat.

I disliked that front seat very much, first, because I could not look at the people seated behind me, father thinking it improper for even children to "turn around," and second, because I had an uneasy consciousness that the minister looked at me very often. When I occasionally turned my head over my shoulder, not being able to bear the suspense of wondering who was behind me, I would feel father tweaking my shoulder, and I knew the language of that tweak was, "Peter Paul, face the pulpit."

The service was opened by the singing of

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a psalm ; the Welsh Singer standing in front of the pulpit would, by the aid of a tuning-fork, which he struck against the corner of the pulpit, " catch the air," and the members of the congregation would fall in, rolling the old psalm-tune up among the rafters in a way that filled me with strange awe, making little creeping sensations chase each other up and down my backbone.

After the psalm, which we sang seated, there followed a prayer an hour in length.

Every one reverently rose to his feet at the beginning of this prayer, but after the lapse of half an hour the women began to drop to their seats. The men would have thought it unmanly to succumb to their weariness, and relieved it by shifting from one foot to another.

After a while I, who did not feel the necessity of keeping my eyes shut all the time, saw Highland Malcolm making stealthy passes between his pocket and his eyes during that long prayer ; and some years afterward, when he was explaining the reason why he had become blind in his old age, he acknowledged that he had put tobacco in

his eyes in church at prayer-time to keep himself awake.

In the beginning father tried to make me stand through the hour-long prayer, but one day I was so entirely overcome by sleep that I fell while standing, struck my head a somewhat serious blow, and had to be carried sobbing out of the church. After that mother said: "Let Peter Paul sit down at the prayer, father, when he wants to." And I was allowed my liberty as to sitting or standing.

When the minister had finished his sermon in English, he repeated it in Gaelic, for the benefit of some of his hearers who could not understand English. And we would sit through another hour listening to a flow of words, not understanding a syllable of them. After this second sermon, the congregation, which was large, was dismissed, and leaving the church they would assemble in the churchyard, and under the trees spread their lunch, seat themselves in companies on the grass, and partake of the refreshments which they had brought with them.

This was the most enjoyable part of the day's programme to me, and the only part

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that made it at all endurable. It was a real picnic to sit on the grass, surrounded by scores of friendly people, and eat from the baskets the pies, tarts, cakes and doughnuts which the farmers' wives had brought. I believe there was more real communion of saints over that luncheon on the grass than there ever was while listening to the long sermons or singing the Psalms. It was the practice simply to open a basket and pass it around until it was empty; and no one seemed to notice how often a boy helped himself.

After luncheon we went into church and had another sermon, followed by a Sunday school. It was always five o'clock in the afternoon when we arrived home. But I heard Highland Malcolm remark once while on the road:

"It's worth walkin' the whole seven miles just ta hear the Welsh Singer sing:

'Jehovah shall preserve thy goin' out,
Thy comin' in.'

Aigh," he added in a lower tone, as if communing with himself, "it seems as if

He does it for a man e'en when he has taken a drop too much an' canna keep the path."

After a while the service and the long walk thereto became monotonous, and Sunday became a dreaded day to me. At day-break father would call upstairs: "Peter Paul, come now; it's time to be up!"

I knew there was no use trying to resist, so, sleepy and sulky, I rolled out of bed, carrying all the bed-clothes in a tangle on to the floor for poor mother afterwards to pick up and untangle.

Regardless of the odours of the pine, the balsam, and the innumerable wild flowers sifting in through every crevice in our log cabin; heedless of the glee of the hundreds of birds filling the green galleries of the trees, and making the morning air ring with the blithesome joy of their song, I dressed, ate my bread-and-milk, and was ready for mother to come, brush my suit, and put on my white linen collar, which she had stitched herself. Then, Bible in hand, I walked off with father.

"Peter Paul, bring me home the text,"

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was mother's last injunction, which always seemed to me like her parting kiss.

I was careful for mother's sake to listen until the text was announced, turn down the corner of the leaf nearest it, and in this fashion carry it home to her.

Mother seldom went to church except on "sacrament Sabbaths," the rough walk through the woods seemed to tire her too much.

The church had two rows of seats, one on the right side, and the other on the left. Between these two rows, down the middle of the church was a wide aisle. In this wide aisle on sacrament Sundays a long table was placed. The table was made of planks supported on wooden horses, and it ran the entire length of the aisle. This pine plank table was made comely by being covered with some of the finest of white linen tablecloths which the women of the congregation had provided ; tablecloths which had been brought from the fatherland and were considered household treasures.

First a sermon was preached, then the minister went through the ceremony of what

was known as "fencing the table." Standing in the high narrow pulpit, he would extend his arms, draped with the long flowing sleeves of his gown, out toward the congregation, and say in such awfully solemn chest-tones that my child's heart almost stopped beating :

"Anyone who is a drunkard ; anyone who is a blasphemer ; anyone who is a liar ; anyone who is a thief ; anyone who is an adulterer ; or anyone who is harbouring in his bosom any known sin whatever, in God's name, I debar that one from the table of the Lord."

More than once Highland Malcolm, on hearing these words, rose to his feet and slipped quickly and silently out of the church.

Then the minister, with slow and solemn step, as if pressed down and made heavy under the weight of the people's infirmities, would walk down and take his seat at the head of the table, behind the tall silver pitcher containing the wine, and the silver communion cup beside the plate of broken bread. And the people with bowed heads would walk to

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seats at each side, chanting in solemn monotony :

"I of salvation take the cup,
On God's name will I call;
I'll pay my vows now to the Lord,
Before His people all."

The plate of broken bread was first passed, each communicant taking a small piece; then the communion cup, when in turn they took a sip of wine, no ways reluctant, it seemed, for all to drink out of the one cup.

Sacrament services were very awe-inspiring occasions, filling me with a sort of nervous dread; and one time when mother could not go, I begged leave to take with me Barney McGee.

When the day's service was over and we were on the road home, I said in a low voice to Barney, "He must be a terrible God, or the elders would not look so awfully solemn and speak in such low tones, and the women shed tears thinking about Him."

"Oh," said Barney cheerfully, "that's the Presbyterians' God! The Methodists' God is quite lively."

Father and mother had been brought up

in the Church of England, and had joined the Presbyterians only because there was no other church at the time in the locality; consequently they were not nearly, as father said, "such Sabbatarians as some of the dyed-in-the-wool Presbyterians."

The rule in Neil Campbell's house was to draw down the window blinds every Saturday night and never lift them until Monday morning, as looking out of the window on the Sabbath Day was, in his estimation, a breach of the Fourth Commandment. Indeed, on almost any day laughter to Neil was folly, and joy a sin.

"Desist from sic a sinfu' noise," he cried, soundly cuffing the ears of Neil junior, his twelve-year-old son, when one bright Sunday morning the lad forgot himself and broke into a whistle.

Oh, Neil Campbell was the good man; he made his son Neil rise an hour earlier every Sabbath morning to learn a chapter in the Bible before breakfast. He turned his sap-troughs upside down Saturday nights in sugar-making time, so that no sap could run into them on the Sabbath. And it was said

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that his dog was so well trained that he would not bark at squirrels or other game in the woods on the sacred day.

There chanced to be no service in the Presbyterian church one Sabbath, and the Englishman came over to our place and took me home with him to dinner. On my return he accompanied me most of the way, as he never liked to see me go far alone in the woods. Shortly after he left me I met Neil Campbell, who was returning from a twenty-five mile drive to attend a Presbyterian place of worship.

"Why don't ye go to the Methody meetin' when there's none in our own, Neil?" the Welsh Singer had asked his fellow-churchman.

"Thae Methodys! Thae Methodys! I'd think it sacrilege to listen til thae fussin' bodies!" returned Neil.

"Where hae ye been, boy?" he demanded when he met me that day.

"I have been over to see the Englishman," I said trembling, for I always felt a certain fear of the stern, unhappy-looking man.

"That 'Piscopal!" he hissed between his teeth. Then looking at me he said:

"Do you know that this is the Sawbath Day o' the Lord God Almighty? What excuse are you goin' to give at the bar o' God if a tree falls on you an' kills you? Veeditin', no less!"

This frightened me very much, for it was quite windy enough to blow down a tree. My questioner rode away, and I went on my way trembling.

"God knows I have got to get home, anyway," I said to myself. "I cannot stay out here in the woods, so surely He'll let me get home this *once*." I began to walk very fast.

So long as the trees along the road were small, or not near enough to reach me should they fall, I felt comparatively comfortable; but when the road wound through some tall pines, I scanned each one carefully before I passed it, measuring it with a calculating eye, wondering whether it was tall enough to reach me should it fall.

I carefully kept the middle of the road, unless when a tree seemed dangerously near,

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then I went to the other side, and ran past it as fast as my feet could carry me.

I began to imagine that they looked at me with a threatening mien, as if they would fall on me and kill me if they could; and with as much defiance as fear would allow me to put into my voice I whimpered:

“ You’ll all have to come down out of that, anyway, before I am twenty-one ! ”

By the time I had reached home I had promised myself never, never to go visiting on the Sabbath again.

Another Sabbath we were all walking leisurely from the church when Barney McGee’s father—who, alas, was not a church-goer—came running all out of breath, crying excitedly:

“ Mистер Campbell ! Mистер Campbell ! ”
(he was not very long in the neighbourhood, and had not yet got to calling his neighbours by their first names) “ the pigs is in yer wheat ! ”

“ Well,” said Neil coldly, “ it’s the Sabbath Day ; I canna drive them out.”

“ Why, man, they’ll have it all ruint by a-Monday ! ” cried Barney McGee’s father.

"That's my concern," returned Neil crabbedly.

Barney McGee's father said no more, and the pigs were allowed to root and ruin in the wheatfield (a small piece of ground which Neil had wrested from the forest and enclosed by a stump fence) until twelve o'clock Sunday night.

At that hour Neil, who had been sitting up watching his clock until the hour hand touched the point which indicated that the Sabbath Day was over, rose and rushed out of the house, and with loud shouting and mighty rage set his dogs on the rooters, which by this time had the wheatfield almost demolished.

Neil seemed to like to talk over weighty subjects with my father. On many a winter's night when the wind howled down our great chimney, when the sky was moonless and starless, and the long bare arms of the thousand trees around our little house lashed at everything within their reach with the vengeance of so many furies, he would sit in front of our fireplace, with his shoulders screwed up toward his ears, and his eyes fixed

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on the back-log, while he wondered where Melchizedek was born, and how Moses in the Pentateuch could write an account of his own death.

There was a certain something about the great hearth-fire that seemed to work on the emotions of those sitting in front of it, loosening tongues, and leading their owners to make disclosures of what on other occasions were held sacred. Sometimes, perhaps, the imagination ran riot and fanciful stories were told as fact.

Highland Malcolm was always led to recall thrilling adventures of "days gone by"; Solomon Slater, in front of the fire, enlarged on his missed opportunities, and how often he came just to the *point* of winning luck, and missed it; 'Lizabeth Hannah, while gazing dreamily at the blaze, loved to talk about the beaux she had when younger, and to recount how many men she had sent away broken-hearted.

CHAPTER IX

" EAST WIND "

ONE never-to-be-forgotten morning father awakened to find a stalwart young Indian stretched at full length in front of our fireplace. Our front door had been unbolted during the night, as was the custom in all pioneer homes ; and the Indian, travelling along the bush-path in the small hours of the night, saw through the windows the light of the fire, for the back-log kept up a continual glow, and, feeling tired and cold—it was the fall of the year—silently entered and stretched himself to rest and warmth in front of our fireplace. Father and mother had been out the day before for a long drive, and had slept so soundly that they never heard the Indian's stealthy entrance to the living-room ; and when they came out from behind the screen of brown blankets which partitioned off their bedroom their astonishment was indeed great.

Mother treated the stranger very kindly,

“East Wind”

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giving him a good breakfast ; and I, when I came down from my attic bed, was simply fascinated by the great, strong-featured, brown man, who looked, as mother said, more like an image in bronze than anything she had ever seen before in flesh and blood.

He gave us his name, a very long Indian word, but he said that in English it meant “East Wind.”

After that first visit, probably because he was treated so kindly, East Wind made us visits at intervals, and, having travelled over a very large part of the North American continent, he had many interesting stories to tell.

The Indian's version of the world's creation was the one story that made the most lasting impression on my memory.

“You know, boy, 'bout de creation of de world?” he said to me one day. I was standing before him urging for a story.

“Yes,” said I.

“Know how world was make?”

“Yes, indeed,” I affirmed. “‘*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*’”

How mother had drilled me on that!

"God?" he said, looking bewildered. "God! He create? Who am he? Same as Blackfoot Injun's Old Man?"

It was now my turn to look bewildered, and I said, "I don't know Blackfoot Indian's Old Man, and I do not know whether he is the same as God or not."

He then proceeded in broken English to tell me the following story:

"Der was one tahm when der was nothink but great water, an' de Old Man he was sittin' on one log wit four animals. Thinkin' very hard, he thought der must be sometink down in under de water, an' wantin' to know what it might be, he sent de animals down one after de other, until de last to go down was de muskrat. He was de only animal to come back to tell de story, bringin' in hees mouth some mud. De Old Man take de mud an' roll it in de palm of hees hand; it grow rapidly an' fall into de water. Soon it grow so beeg dat he step on it, an' place der one wolf. Dis wolf he run over de soft mud, an' wherever he step hees foot a track was made which became one valley; an' where he place not hees foot de plains an' mountains are to

be found. De water rush into some of de wolf's tracks, an' dis become lakes.

“De Old Man den he made man, an' after makin' man he made de buffalo an' de bow-an'-arrow. Den tellin' dem dat de buffalo was for der food for to eat, he taught dem how to shoot buffalo.

“Den de Old Man finish hees work by makin' woman, an' he teach de men how to run after an' catch de women; an' so each man got for heem one wife.

“Dis am de Cree Injun's story of de creation,” he continued :

“Wisukatcak—him same as de Old Man of de Blackfoot Injuns—had a fadder an' a mudder an' one brudder. In dis family dey quarrel, an' one day de husband kill hees wife an' cut off her head. He then told Wisukatcak to take hees little brudder an' run away. He give him before he went a flint, a fire steel, an' one awl. ‘If your mudder's head goes after you,’ he said, ‘throw first de flint, then de fire steel, an' den de awl behind you, an' say de words I tell you.’ He tell him de words he wished heem to say. An' Wisukatcak take hees

little brudder, de flint, de fire steel, an' de awl, an' go away. As soon as dey were started de mudder's Head went rollin' after them, cryin' for her children. As hees fadder tell, Wisukatcak throw de flint behind heem an' cry :

“ ‘ Let one great wall of rock rise up across de earth ! ’

“ An' just at once one great wall of rock did rise up, an' in dat way de Rocky Mountains were made to stretch across de continent.

“ When de Head come to de wall of rock it could not get over it at first, but after a while, by tryin' hard, it found a way and went rollin' on as before. Den Wisukatcak throw de fire steel behind heem an' cry :

“ ‘ Let one big fire flame up so high and stretch 'cross de earth ! ’

“ So a big fire rise up quick, de hashes of which can be seen in de volcano of de Sierra and de Rocky Mountain.

“ When de Head she come to de fire she stop for a tahm, but after some try she manage to get through, though much singed, and went rolling on again, calling for her leetle ones.

“Den Wisukatcak throw one awl hard behind him and cry :

“‘Let a great beeg hedge of thorns spring up 'cross de earth !’

“ At once time de thorns spring up, making a barrier impassable, parts of which can yet be seen in de beeg hedges of de great giant cactus plants of de South.

“ But in some way de Head she manage to get thro' de cactus hedge of thorns, an' she go rolling on as before, calling for her leetle ones.

“ After long tahn Wisukatcak and hees leetle brudder cam to a beeg river, and seeing one pelican swimming dere, he say :

“ ‘Pelican, tak' us 'cross to d'other side.’

“ De kind pelican he took dem on his back and carried dem 'cross.

“ After a tahn the Head she come to de river, and she meet pelican and say, ‘ I am looking for my leetle ones, tak' me to d'other side.’

“ De pelican she offer services, but near de middle of de river were some boulders rising 'bove de top of water, and de pelican was

much 'fraid, and quick threw his burden on one beeg rock, and brok' de faithful Head all to pieces. De brains of she may be seen floating to dis day on de river in de flood tahn, and are call by dat name, '*foam.*' "

After hearing these stories I haunted every pond and pool to be found in the vicinity of our home, looking for the brains of poor Head, which might be floating on the surface. And the great world became to me a more enchanting place than I had before imagined.

As time went on, East Wind made himself very useful, acting as a courier between distant places for my mother. He was very swift of foot, and thought nothing of running ten miles to carry a message.

One morning he came panting into our house at daybreak with an invitation to mother to attend a quilting-bee that day at a home ten miles distant. It would be considered an offence for mother to absent herself without some very good reason for doing so ; but the question as to how she could get there immediately occupied the attention of my parents, father having lent his yoke

of oxen for a couple of days to a neighbour.

While they were yet talking, the wooden latch of our front door was lifted, and Solomon Slater stepped into the house. He was told the trouble, and immediately the service of Cromwell and Blucher, his pair of oxen, was offered to carry mother anywhere she desired to go.

"'Lizabeth Hannah an' Mary Martha have gone to the quiltin'-bee in a neighbour's wagon. Cromwell and Blucher are standin' there idle, an' ye kin jest as well have 'em es not," urged Solomon Slater.

Father accepted the kindness, and Solomon started off home to hitch up the animals and bring them to our place.

In a short time he came driving into the yard with the great Cromwell and Blucher hitched to a light wagon. Their mottled black-and-white and red-and-white hair had been brushed by Mary Martha until it shone like silk, and they stepped with an air of importance no other yoke of oxen ever assumed. There was also a certain expression in their eyes which mother said was

always in the eyes of petted animals, as if they felt that this world was a pretty good place in which to live, and a place where even oxen could do pretty much as they pleased.

Mother and I—for I was allowed to go along for the drive—climbed into the wagon, with the assistance of a chair; and father, having placed a rope over the horns of the oxen, which was to be the guiding rein, gathered the ends in his hands and climbed to the seat beside us.

Everything promised well as we started out, father holding in his right hand the rope ends, and in his left a long ox-goad, which Solomon insisted on his taking. "Them oxen may need it," he said; "they're no angels, I tell ye—sometimes." The season was early spring, when the days were warm, while the nights were quite cool. The morning sun had melted the thin coating of ice which had formed on the surface of the various ponds and pools, and the water sparkled brightly. Evidently Cromwell and Blucher were attracted by the sparkling water—perhaps Solomon Slater had forgotten to

give them a drink before he brought them to our place—for when we were about half-way to our destination they suddenly bolted from the road, drew the wagon into a soft, swampy spot, in the centre of which lay a shining pool of water, and, bending their heads, they drank deeply.

When they had satisfied their thirst, however, they seemed to like the place so well they decided to remain there.

Father began pulling on the rope lines, and shouting “Gee!” “Haw!” “Back!” But Cromwell and Blucher seemed unconscious that he was speaking. He then used the ox-goad, but they never moved a muscle. There we sat half an hour, unable to get the brutes to move.

We heard a peculiar chuckling sound, and looking in the direction from whence it came, we saw the tall, sinewy form of East Wind running along the road. He was looking at us, and it was the only time in my life that I ever saw East Wind smile. He did not stop to assist us—he knew nothing about oxen—but he called as he disappeared through the trees :

"East Wind run ten mile faster than oxen go five."

After awhile James Bryce, the speller, one of the oldest settlers, and much accustomed to the management of oxen, came driving along the trail. Seeing our predicament, he jumped from his wagon, and said :

"Let me hev a chance at them oxen."

Father gladly vacated his seat, and passed the rope lines into his hands.

He refused the seat, saying, "This is a stand-up job."

Then standing in the wagon before mother and me, he began the loudest shouting and heaviest swearing it had ever been my experience to hear.

The oxen pricked up their ears. A slow quiver crept through their heavy bodies. They almost turned their heads to look at this new manager ; then slowly and solemnly they waded out of the miry hole back to the trail.

"There!" said James Bryce triumphantly, "that fatches 'em!"

"Liker than not," he added, as he passed the rope lines back into father's hands, "that

you, a church body, don't b'lieve in cuss-words; but nothin' else will move oxen ef they take one of them balky fits. Ye saw that fer yerself. Yer nice pious manner an' saft-sawder words had no effect on 'em at all."

Then turning to mother, and touching his slouching hat, he added, "You won't be offended at me, ma'am? I wouldn't use jest eggsactly sech strong langwidge in the presence of a lady on all occasions, but nothin' short o' what I said would stir them oxen."

Father heartily thanked our rescuer, and we proceeded on our journey to the quilting-bee.

In good time we arrived at the place, and saw at a glance through the windows of the house that a number of women had already assembled. We drove into the large yard surrounding the house, and made an attempt to draw up at the front door. But Cromwell and Blucher did not think as we did; they refused to stop at the door, made a wide circuit of the yard, and coming back to the open gateway, with long, firm strides they passed out and headed toward home, despite

father's loud shouting of "Whoa!" "Back!" "Gee!" "Haw!" and vigorous pulling at the rope lines.

Father was evidently greatly chagrined that he could not control his team, and I was grievously disappointed about not getting into the house—they always gave a little boy some cake or a piece of pie should he chance to go to a home where there was a quilting-bee.

After we had proceeded toward home about a quarter of a mile, mother burst into as musical a peal of laughter as I ever heard. I thought at the time that it was fully as sweet as Ishbel's laughter.

Father did not join in the laugh. He said that it went against his grain to be conquered by dumb brutes.

"There is no bit or bridle to control the animals," said my father, "and the use of the ox-goat seems to stimulate them to greater effort toward getting home."

"I am afraid you will injure some of their shining coat of hair," said my mother. "You have laid on that ox-goat so heavily."

"I never could give utterance to such

language as Bryce used if the oxen stayed in that miry hole the remainder of their lives," father added. "They evidently have been accustomed to that sort of talk to make them obey orders."

"No, no," said mother; "they are not accustomed to that sort of language—they were simply startled by it into yielding obedience. They belong to the Slater family, and have been petted, pampered, coddled, until they are completely spoiled. No doubt they will do anything for Mary Martha and 'Lizabeth Hannah, or for Solomon Slater himself, but the spoiled beauties are not willing to be hectorred by a stranger."

The oxen never stopped until they had landed us in Solomon Slater's yard.

"Well, well," cried Solomon, holding up his hands, when he was told the story of the oxen's bad behaviour, "that's amazin'! Them gentle brutes! Ef Mary Martha had been there, an' hed as much as *whispered* to them oxen that she wanted to go to the quiltin'-bee, they'd 'a' took her there straight es an arrow from a bow. Yes, siree, they would!"

Mother, father, and I climbed out of the wagon, preferring to walk home along the quiet bush-road to having Cromwell and Blucher carry us there—provided they were willing to do so.

The following morning early, East Wind was dispatched to the house where the quilting-bee had been held, to give the woman who gave the kind invitation an account of the scandalous behaviour of Cromwell and Blucher, and to exonerate mother from blame for not being present at the fête, and taking part in the making of "stars," "bars," "snake-fences," "clover-leaves," "hearts," and "rings," on the surface of her patchwork.

CHAPTER X

THE GOVERNOR'S DINNER

AN event that stirred the interest of a large portion of the Peninsula was the Governor's dinner party. Prim little notes, brought by a lackey on horseback, were handed in the doorway of every reputable homestead, inviting the heads of each house to a dinner party given by the Governor of Upper Canada and his lady. The latter had taken up their residence on the Peninsula within sound of the mighty cataract, and the dinner was given to enable the Governor to become acquainted with the people. It was the general opinion that no one would be excused unless he were detained at home by illness, and the great work of getting ready made a sound of going in the land.

"We'll have to take Peter Paul with us, Thaddeus," said my mother. "We have no one to leave him with except Sallie, and that I cannot do."

Candlelight Days

"Oh, no," said my father; "children are not included in the invitation."

"If we go, Thaddeus, we must take him; how could I feel at ease to be gone a whole day leaving him here alone? The Indians, as you always declare, may be trustworthy enough, but one never knows what might occur. I could not go without Peter Paul."

This so accorded with my views that I ran over and threw my arms around my mother's neck. Father said no more, and that very day mother went about preparing a suitable outfit for me to wear.

"I can explain to Her Excellency that we could not leave Peter Paul," I heard my mother afterwards reasoning with my father. "It will not be necessary for him to appear at the table; he can play with the Governor's little boy, who is near his own age, I hear."

Finding a soft piece of lustrous blue silk, a bright "cerulean blue," which she had brought from India, that land of silk, she made me a pair of knee-breeches; and out of a remnant of her wedding-dress material she made my small white coat, decorated down

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the front, which was fastened over tight with brass buttons, in true military style.

"Does he not look a veritable little Napoleon, Thaddeus?" said mother proudly, fitting on my suit after she had finished it.

"You cannot keep your head covered in the presence of Royal representatives, Peter Paul," she said, "so your buckskin cap will do to wear on the road. Take it off before you enter the house."

Father's military dress suit, which had lain in his wooden chest ever since he had crossed the seas, was now brought out and aired. Mother's wedding frock, made of the soft, thick, lustrous silk of India, was taken from a similar receptacle. The said frock had a very short waist and a very full skirt and great balloon-like sleeves. It had been so long folded away that it required infinite pressing with a hot flat iron to restore it to its original smoothness.

Fortunately fashions did not change so rapidly then as now, and the fact that the frock had lain so long in lavender in the depths of the wooden chest did not prevent mother from looking very charming and quite up to

date in it. I am very certain no one at the Governor's dinner, not excepting the Governor's wife herself, looked better than my mother in her wedding frock.

We travelled the path through green-clad trees and singing birds on horseback, father holding me before him on his saddle, while mother, her white silk skirt carefully gathered up under a linen duster, was seated on another horse.

Our progress was at a snail's pace owing to the snags in the road ; but what of that ? The squirrels frisked, the birds sang, the crows cawed over our heads, the leaves were green, the sky was blue, and the touch of the air on one's cheek was like the warm gentle kiss of a mother. Only once, in the most lonely part of the road, were our pulses quickened by the sight of a panther, which gnashed its teeth at us before it dashed away among the trees out of sight.

When we were within a few rods of the Governor's house we halted and dismounted. Mother, spreading her duster on a log, seated herself, and drawing from a small bag she had carried on her arm white stockings and a pair

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of satin slippers, replaced the dark ones she had on with them, putting the former in the bag. I then helped my father brush down the voluminous folds of her skirt, and pick out the crushed puffs of her balloon sleeves.

When we reached the great front door I clung to mother, and in her silken folds was swept into the drawing-room.

I looked frightenedly around, but was reassured by seeing some of our old neighbours togged out in bits of their best finery. The Welsh Singer, whom I had never before in summer-time seen other than barefooted, was seated in that grand room shod in a pair of new boots. Mary Martha was there dressed in white, with bunches of wild roses in her hair, and catching up, here and there, folds of her frock. Alec Macfarlane was there with his large medal gleaming on his breast, and a pistol and bowie-knife fastened around his waist. I noticed that Alec seldom took his eyes off Mary Martha. I thought he must be admiring the nosegays of pink roses pinned to her frock. The gayest dressed of all the company were a few copper-coloured women.

Mother disposed of me by putting me in

a chair ; and suddenly I became conscious of a Vision by my side—a very beautiful lady, I was sure, although I scarcely dared to look at her face, wearing a pink gown. The gown overflowed the chair in which its owner was seated, and spread itself over the left knee of my blue silk breeches. I did not dare move for fear I should disarrange it, and the very contact of it filled me with ecstatic little thrills.

At this moment the Governor's wife left her place at the drawing-room door, and coming over to my mother she said :

“ My dear Mrs. Thornton, where is Mr. Godfrey Grey ? I expected he would arrive along with you, as you live in the same locality. I want him to meet the Honourable Margaret Cameron.” (At this point she introduced the Vision to my mother.) “ I know they would suit each other admirably : he is such a cultured man. I became acquainted with Miss Cameron on the Continent,” she continued, “ and I was fortunate enough to meet her on our arrival in this country. She is making an indefinite stay in that interesting city of Quebec. I prevailed on her to

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make me a short visit here, being particularly anxious that she should see the people at this dinner party. A packet has begun to travel periodically the great river and lake which lie between us, and I tell her she must come up and see me several times this summer. Our home is not permanent in Canada."

My mother assured Her Excellency that the Englishman must arrive very soon.

I saw him a short time before we started," she said, "and I am sure he must soon put in an appearance; he was making preparations when we left home."

There was a fresh arrival, and Her Excellency moved back to the door.

While the two matrons had been talking I had noticed an agitation in the pink drapery on my left, even the portion which lay across my knee had shivered; and as quickly as Her Excellency had gone the Vision leaned across me, so that her breath touched my hair, and whispered:

"My dear lady, will you kindly tell Her Excellency, the first opportunity you find, that I felt indisposed, and was obliged to leave the assembly? Tell her not to concern

herself about me. I am not seriously ill ; but she is not to expect me to return to the drawing-room."

With this she rose and quickly departed.

It was more than an hour afterwards that I heard Her Excellency saying :

" My dear Mr. Grey, why did you not come earlier ? I had a most accomplished young lady to whom I wished to introduce you, but now she has retired. I am greatly disappointed. You two would have suited each other, I feel certain. I met her in Quebec, an old friend, and persuaded her to visit me for a few days."

Politely expressing his regrets, the Englishman did not even take the pains to inquire the lady's name.

When dinner was announced a maid came and, leading me away from my mother, conducted me up a flight of stairs, and ushered me into the presence of a boy about my own age.

The boy was dressed in a suit of some ordinary brown material, and he looked at my gay attire evidently with some envy. When, by staring at each other for several

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minutes, we felt better acquainted, he came nearer and fingered my brass buttons, counting them.

"Where did you get *that*?" he said, pointing to my white silk coat.

"It is made out of a piece of my mother's wedding gown that was left over," I replied with youthful candour. "It came from India."

"From India!" he said with scorn, laughing aloud.

This incensed me so—I had never before been ridiculed, or had my word doubted—that I rushed forward, seized him by the shoulders, and shook him vigorously. In a few moments he and I were rolling over each other on the floor, I, in my rage, quite forgetful of my fine clothes.

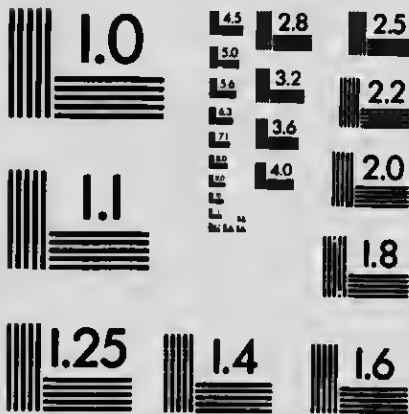
I believe I was having the better of it, and should soon have made my opponent take back his words, when a maid opened the door of the room, and throwing up her hands she screamed to another maid in the passageway behind her :

"Mercy, me! Here, this little bush-boy is rolling Master Fred all about the floor!"



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Then she seized me and pulled me away from the Governor's son and, completely ignoring me, she raised the latter from his prostrate position, and began to brush the dust off his clothes.

"I'm not a bush-boy!" I cried hotly. "I was born in India!" Mother had often impressed me with this fact.

"Do you believe it?" said the first maid to the second. Then the two began to talk about me, in my presence, as if I had been deaf, wondering whether I really had been born in India, one doubting.

"His mother is dressed in white silk, while most of the farmers' wives are in the linen they have spun themselves," said the first speaker, "and his father wears a military uniform."

Then they both turned and looked at me intently.

At this moment the door opened, and in walked Ishbel. Her mother had been obliged to bring her to the Governor's dinner for the same reason that mine had to bring me—because she had no one to leave her with.

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"*He* thinks these clothes of mine did not come from India," I stammered, by way of apology for my appearance, pointing to the Governor's son.

Ishbel seemed to take in the situation at once, and coming over to me she began with her soft hands to brush the dust from my coat.

"These are very pretty clothes," she said gently. "I believe they *did* come from India; we have none so nice here."

The speech and the voice appeased my wrath; the little storm seemed to have cleared the air, and I spent the remainder of the day very happily with the Governor's son and Ishbel.

After the dinner downstairs was over, I recognised the Englishman's voice making a speech; and some time after that we heard steps on the stairs, and a maid ushered him into the room.

"I told your mother I would come and see how you were getting along, Peter Paul," he explained, taking a seat and lifting Ishbel on his knee.

His presence was welcome, and I led him

into telling us an Indian story, just to have Ishbel entertained.

The one regret I had at the close of the day was that I did not get to the grand dinner table. A lunch had been sent upstairs to the nursery, everything that even a small boy could desire, but I had a great longing to see the display downstairs.

For weeks after I made my mother tell me many, many times about the great roast wild turkeys, in which the wing and tail feathers had been pushed back into the flesh, before they were brought to the table, to show the guests what heroic birds they had been, and the whole roast pigs on platters which graced each end of the tables, resting on their legs, as if in a running attitude, with a bright red apple in each of their open mouths.

When we were taking our leave from the Governor's house, Her Excellency, the Governor's wife, who had evidently recognised my mother's superiority, said: "You must let your little boy come again, Mrs. Thornton, to visit my son." Mother, thanking her very cordially, promised to do so.

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"I'll have to fight him if I do come," I whispered into mother's ear. "I had to roll him over on the floor before he'd behave."

Mother placed her hand over my mouth, blushing a vivid scarlet, fearing Her Excellency had heard me, and said reprovingly, "It is not polite for little boys to whisper in company."

On the road home, when they thought I was asleep, I heard her laughingly telling my father in an undertone about what a daring little rebel I was, fighting the Governor's son.

Then they talked about the various guests who had been at the dinner party, remarking that it was the most mixed company they had ever taken dinner with.

"Did you notice the Englishman, Thaddeus?" queried my mother. "He is so very reticent one can learn nothing about his past; but such clothes as he wore to-day belong exclusively to the aristocracy of England, and it is their custom to wear wigs to match each costume."

"I did notice something odd about his hair," said my father.

"And that speech he made," continued my mother. "No other present, excepting the Governor himself, could have done it so well. He is a college-bred man."

"Oh, Thaddeus," she added, as the thought just occurred to her, "you missed seeing the beautiful young lady—the Honourable Somebody. I forget her name. Do you remember her name, Peter Paul?" she asked, leaning towards me, for I had sat upright to let my parents know that I was awake, not thinking it the proper thing to allow them to talk in my presence while thinking that I was asleep.

No; so many things had occurred I had completely forgotten the Vision's name.

"Well, I thought she would be the most interesting person at the dinner," continued my mother, "and I was much disappointed that she fell ill and had to retire. She was from across the sea, a beauty with a foreign air, which I could not very well distinguish. I wish you could remember her name, Peter Paul. Her Excellency was very anxious that she should meet the Englishman, but he did not arrive until after she had retired."

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The tree-toads and the crickets were chirping, the fireflies were flashing their lanterns, a whip-poor-will was calling breathlessly, and a sobbing screech-owl was somewhere among the tree-tops. The myriad doings of the summer night had a soothing effect; I was soon sound asleep, and heard no more of my father's and mother's conversation.

CHAPTER XI

THE HEART-BREAKING QUEST

JUST a short time before the Governor's dinner party Long Tom had been at our place, and had made each member of the family a pair of shoes. In packing up his materials to take leave he had in some way neglected to put in the great ball of wax which he used to stiffen his thread. This was most fortunate, as that ball of wax, we all believed, was instrumental in saving Sal's life.

When the girl had seen us all safely started on our journey to the Governor's house, she occupied herself tidying the home, hanging up and putting away the multitudinous articles that we had left scattered in the trying ordeal of dressing. Later in the day, as time hung heavy on her hands, she went out to see whether she could find any strawberries, which grow in quantities in certain parts of the forest to which the sun had access.

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She wandered in her search farther from home than she realised, and, climbing a large log that lay across her path, it proved to be decayed, and gave away under her weight.

Much to her surprise there rolled out of the broken hollow log two young bear cubs. They immediately set up a cry of fear, and in a few seconds the mother bear appeared on the scene. On seeing the wreckage of her home, she would have wreaked vengeance on Sal had the latter not dropped her berry-pail and taken immediate flight.

The enraged bear followed, and the run was hard and fast. Both Sallie and the bear were out of breath when the house was reached. Sal ran inside and slammed the door on the bear, which was just at her heels.

Just then, to her consternation, she saw that the lower sash of one of the front windows was raised. The bear saw it at the same time, and placed her front paws on the window-ledge for the purpose of jumping into the room, her mouth open with rage and heat. Long Tom's ball of wax was lying on the window-sill, and Sal, scarcely knowing what

she was doing, seized it, and threw it into the bear's mouth.

The creature closed its teeth sharply on the wax, and immediately found that it had some business of its own to attend to. It could not open its teeth again. It backed out of the window, and began to claw at its mouth, but the wax had begun to melt and run out from between its teeth, and the paws were soon covered with the mixture. Then the creature rubbed the ground with its head, and but succeeded in covering itself with old leaves and twigs. It continued to rub and roll until its head was one great ball of leaves, and by the time the Englishman had reached our place—he had travelled faster and reached home an hour before us—the poor animal looked more like a huge bunch of leaves than anything else.

Finding his gun, the Englishman dispatched the bear; then he and Sallie went in search of the cubs.

They found the baby bears crying pitifully, and the Englishman gathered them into his arms and carried them home.

They were our pets until their master

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carried them off, on one of his journeys, "to form a nucleus in the new country for a zoological garden," he said.

The day following the dinner party the Englishman came over to our place evidently to talk it over. Just as he arrived, Barney McGee walked along from the other direction, bringing the intelligence that the Welsh Singer was unable to leave his bed with the soreness of his feet, the result of wearing boots at the Governor's dinner.

A little conversation followed regarding the fact that the Welsh Singer wore no shoes during six or eight months of every year.

"That man must be part Indian, or he never would have such tough feet," said my mother.

"By the way," said my father, "I noticed that a number of the women of the aborigines were present at the Governor's dinner—half-breeds: children, I suppose, of some of our leading men whose wives are squaws. I much admired the courtesy with which our white ladies treated them—quite as if they had been their equals."

"And why not?" replied the Englishman quickly. "Those women were as educated and refined as any there. Why should our white women look down upon the children of the noble red woman? It is a most unanswerable question."

"The Englishman seems very much interested in the native tribes," said my mother, after the former had gone. "He answered you with almost asperity that time you drew comparisons between the white woman and the Indian. One could never even imagine a brown stain in *his* blond face and flaxen hair," she added, laughing.

"Oh, they are only a study for him," said my father; "another study, along with the flora and fauna of this New World."

A few days later the Englishman again visited our place, with the information that a great Indian game was going to be played at Niagara in a couple of weeks, and he asked my mother's permission to take me to see it.

"I have no objection to your taking him. I know he would enjoy a day with you, and I feel assured that he will be well cared for.

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Do not let the Indians steal him," she added hastily.

"I'll be responsible for him," returned the Englishman, coldly, I thought. Then, turning to me, he said:

"Practise riding that pony of yours, Peter Paul, so as to be ready for the jaunt to Niagara on his back."

The pony to which he referred was a small French-Canadian animal which he had given me as a present on my last birthday.

The sun was low in the heavens the morning that the Englishman and I rode out and took the path through the forest leading toward Niagara.

"We have a day of interest before us, Peter Paul," he said; "it is the national game of the Indians we are about to witness—lacrosse—to be played between the Mohawks and the Senecas."

Our road wound in and out around the massive oaks, walnuts, and pines like a brown ribbon fringed with green. Jack-in-the-pulpit, with his flower companions, stood like sentinels on either side. Summer had outspread every vestige of her draperies on

tree and vine ; and the various members of the fern family waved their banners of salutation as our horses waded among them. Sweet, elusive bird-notes broke the silence at intervals, and shy little quadrupeds flitted at our approach.

He rode his favourite chestnut, and I was proudly riding my French-Canadian. He had been quiet and preoccupied for some time, when he broke the silence, saying softly :

“ Margaret may be there ; she seems to be near to-day. This game has attracted wide attention—has been talked about all over Canada, and it would be like her to want to see the Indians at their sport.”

“ Is *she* an Indian ? ” I inquired, not knowing very well whether he was talking to me or thinking out loud.

“ She is a beautiful Scots girl, Peter Paul,” he replied, looking around at me with a startled expression, as if he had forgotten my presence.

When we reached Niagara we saw that the game of lacrosse had attracted wide attention ; an immense number of Indians of both tribes, men and women, all gaily attired,

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were present. There were also hundreds of white people.

Each contesting party of Indians was under the leadership of the tribe. The players were naked, except for a loin cloth, and presented to a boy a very fearsome spectacle.

When the ball would accidentally fly in among the crowd of spectators, the Indians would follow it, and so absorbed were they in the thought of getting the ball to the desired goal they struck right and left, regardless of shins.

The Englishman did not appear to pay very much attention to the game; putting me in a place of safety, he went off among the crowd.

He would come back every hour, take a seat by my side, and rest awhile.

The last time he left me, a beautiful white-clad woman, with a thin gauze veil draping her hat and face, stepped to my side, and, stooping down until her mouth was close to my ear, she said:

"Little boy, what is the name of that man to whom you were just talking?"

"That is Mr. Godfrey Grey," I replied. "Are you Margaret?" looking up into her face. "For if you are, he thought you might be here to-day."

She trembled, and the colour fled from her face, and she whispered hastily, "I thought he had returned to England; they *said* he had, or I never should have come up again."

This seemed to make her recover herself, and she said firmly: "I am a strange lady visiting Niagara Falls. I just came here yesterday, and I go away to-day. I am going away immediately." Then, taking my two hands into hers, she said, "I want you to promise me, little boy, that you will tell no one that I have been talking to you; will you not promise me this?"

With those great pleading eyes looking into mine, what else could I do but give the promise? And such was the tenderness of my conscience at that time I believe threatened death itself could not have made me break it. Where had I seen that face before? Something—something I could not understand or explain—reminded me of the pink gown that

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had lain across my knee at the Governor's dinner party. But I had not really looked into the face of the owner of the pink gown, and was not sure that it looked like this face. This was a *white* gown now which was floating around me, and I concluded that it must be another Vision.

The lady must have seen my tender conscience in my face, for she seemed quite satisfied with my promise, and went away.

She was only gone a few moments; the perfume of her garments still lingered in the air around me when the Englishman returned.

I have wondered since whether he felt her presence, for he began at once to say, "Peter Paul, if you should see a beautiful woman among this crowd of people, with eyes and hair of midnight, and the willowy grace of the white birch, call my attention to her."

I do not know what I replied. Such a one had just been stooping over me. I shut my eyes for fear I should see her again, and trembled with the burden of the great secret which I carried.

However, I went home, feeling more important, in a way, than I ever felt before, in the consciousness of having a great secret between myself and the beautiful lady—a secret which no one else in the world knew anything about.

During the months that followed I sometimes talked in my sleep, and when my mother repeated the words which I had said I knew that I had been talking about the beautiful strange lady whom I had met at Niagara. It was a thought of my own to begin to add to my regular nightly prayer a short secret petition for the welfare of the beautiful mysterious woman in white who had so strangely crossed my path, and whom I somehow felt was in trouble.

But in time I forgot the event, as I forgot other childish experiences, or only remembered it with the dimness of a dream.

Almost immediately after our return from Niagara the Englishman went off on one of his mysterious journeys. It was well that I had Mary Martha to comfort me at this time, for it was whispered all over the Peninsula that the Englishman had gone back to his

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native land, and we need never expect to see him among us again.

One bright day, however, after an absence of two months, he rode into our yard.

I had heard the older people wondering what took him away on those periodical jaunts, so the first opportunity I found I said :

"Where do you go when you leave us for so many days?"

"Oh, Peter Paul," he replied sadly, "I go on a false quest, a heart-breaking quest."

He looked so sorrowful that I did not dare to ask him any more questions.

CHAPTER XII

A TOUCH OF COLOUR

No more interesting character came into my little circle of acquaintances during those early days than Anson Holmes, a very handsome and clever mulatto boy. He had succeeded in making his escape from slavery, and was living in the village of Niagara.

The people of the far-away Southern States of America at that time thought it proper that they should keep African slaves; the latter, however, were not always satisfied with their position, and frequently ran away, seeking refuge in Canada. At the time we became acquainted with Anson there were between four and five hundred runaway slaves in the village of Niagara.

The Englishman seemed to take a great interest in the mulatto boy. "That intellectual face means something," he said. "I should like to see what he would do if he had half a chance in life." And he persuaded young Anson Holmes to come to him for

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instruction, to fit himself for the position of teacher among the coloured people.

Anson was an ambitious boy, and was much pleased with the idea. Three days in each week he walked the twelve miles to the Englishman's house to recite his lessons.

In time he was thought to know enough to start a small school; but even after he had assumed the dignity of schoolmaster he continued to come every Saturday, spending the whole day in the study of grammar, geography, arithmetic and spelling.

During the recesses between study hours, Anson, Sallie and I would retire to the depths of the forest, where the mulatto boy would mount a stump, strike an attitude, and deliver an eloquent and impassioned harangue against slavery. Sallie and I were his only visible hearers, but Anson gesticulated wildly, stamping his stump platform and pounding his imaginary desk as if conscious of the innumerable company of birds, squirrels, chipmunks, field-mice, and other small animals and insects, whose jewelled eyes watched curiously the strange performance from many a hidden nook and corner.

It was Anson's day of triumph when he could persuade the Englishman to go down to Niagara to a tea-meeting, or a barbecue among the coloured people, and take me. He seemed to think in this way that he might be giving some remuneration to his teacher, who would accept no other.

"As soon as the ex-slaves felt secure in their new home, their old fun-loving, social instincts revived," said the Englishman, "and they have begun to practise some of the festivities they had known in their land of Egypt."

A barbecue feast consisted for the most part of an animal roasted whole. It was the practice of these Niagara blacks to dig a hole in the ground, and line it with red-hot stones; on the stones they would place a great gridiron, or something that served in the place of one, and on the gridiron was put a whole ox, dressed and split to the backbone. Beside this ox was placed whole chickens, ducks, turkeys, geese, onions, potatoes, and all kinds of vegetables and savoury greens. When all was securely packed, a covering of hot stones was put on

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top, and the whole closed from the air with ashes or earth, and left a certain time to cook.

Aunt Susan Carter was the Mistress of Ceremonies on these social occasions. She was noted as being the best cook in the black colony, could make the crispest doughnuts, and fry the juiciest chicken, and by reason of these accomplishments was a woman of power in the community; and Aunt Susan always backed Anson's invitation to the Englishman and me to be present on the festive occasion.

It was one day when we two were in attendance at a barbecue on Niagara Common, the savoury odours of the great roast which was in progress whetting my appetite to a keen edge, that suddenly there walked in among the group of coloured people to our right (a place had been set apart surrounded by a rope where the white invited guests were kept in seclusion) a strange black man. He was a tall, athletic-looking fellow, with sunken eyes, a haggard face, and weather-worn clothes. With all he had a strange air of excitement about him, and stepping out on the Common in front of the multitude, he raised his hand. There was a great silence.

"Breddern," gasped the stranger, for emotion almost deprived him of his voice, "my name is Washington Moseby! I've run away from Ole Kentucky! I heard ob this great land ob liberty which some ob you had reached, and, prayin' God to help, I started out to find it. An' here I am amongst you, glory be to His name! My master sent me to carry a message to a neighbouring planter. I thought it a good opportunity, havin' a pass, to make my escape——"

"Yes, honey! Yes, honey!" came in ejaculations from all points in the black group, who seemed at this moment to have grasped the situation.

"I rode off, and got across the Ohio River," continued the stranger, "an' travellin' by night, followin' the Polar Star, an' restin' by day in the woods, I finally reached the great stream, the Niagara River. There I left my master's horse, and God's people helping me, crossed over into Canada. Here I am, bred-dern an' sisters, worn an' hungry—but *free!*"

The black people rushed in around the speaker, men shaking his hand, women throwing arms around him and kissing his emaciated

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face, while tears rolled down every cheek, and ejaculations of "Glory be to God!" "Amen!" and "Praise the Lord!" filled the air.

"It is a most touching sight," said the Englishman, suspiciously coughing, while I was swallowing the sobs that would come as I watched the weeping black people. "It is a blessed country," he added, "that has the God-given privilege of offering a place of refuge to the hopeless and afflicted."

After the first excitement had passed, the feast on the Common was prepared with alacrity, the advent of the runaway giving zest to the occasion, and adding fleetness to the feet of those who served.

The Englishman and I returned to our homes that evening, never dreaming any more than the coloured people what a black cloud was hanging over "the city of refuge."

A grand jury of the county in Kentucky, from which Washington Moseby had fled, found a true bill against him for horse-stealing, and a requisition for his arrest in Canada, and surrender to civil officers across the line, was brought to the Governor.

The result was that poor Washington

Moseby was arrested on a charge of horse-stealing, and thrown into gaol in Niagara.

The charge was a pretence, as everyone knew. Indeed, Washington's old owner was declaring at the same time that he only wanted him back in Kentucky to whip him to death, as a warning to slaves against seeking liberty by fleeing to Canada.

A Governor, who had just recently received his appointment to Upper Canada, chose to regard the charge as lawful and sufficient for Washington Moseby's surrender, in spite of the fact that the poor black man had worked all his life gratuitously for the man who claimed him, and, therefore, might fairly claim to be entitled to many horses..

When the Governor's intention became noised abroad, an immense excitement arose in Niagara over the question. The coloured people, men and women, met in crowds and resolved that Washington Moseby should never be given back to slavery.

The white people sympathised largely with the blacks, and encouraged them in their resistance to the surrender of Moseby. A strong petition was sent to the Governor

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begging him not to give up a fugitive slave on the pretence of horse-stealing.

In reply to the petition the Governor said that he thought it was his duty to give up Moseby as a felon, although he would have protected him as a slave.

No sooner had the Governor thus expressed himself than young Anson Holmes, Sallie's and my playfellow, seemed in a night to spring from boyhood to manhood. Heading a negro uprising, he induced the willing people to encamp in small tents night and day before the gates of the gaol, to be ready to rescue Moseby as soon as he should be brought out.

While the people were waiting there Aunt Susan Carter gave evidence of having more than a cook's gifts. Every day she mounted the end of a stout hogshead, and with fiery, eloquent words roused the multitude to frenzy.

The women became excited to such a degree that they stood in solid phalanx, one company relieving another when it was necessary to retire for food and rest, singing negro hymns, praying, and exhorting the men never to allow the poor fugitive to be sent back to slavery.

How little, in the days of peace, we imagined what oratorical powers Aunt Susan Carter possessed, or what heroic blood flowed under the yellow skin of poor Anson Holmes !

The guarding of the gaol by the coloured people lasted over a week, when the sheriff received orders from the Governor to deliver up the prisoner at once. Accordingly a large posse of constables under the direct order of the sheriff entered the gaol, handcuffed poor Moseby, placed him in a wagon, which had been driven into the gaol yard, and guarding him on all sides, drove out.

The coloured people, however, were ready for them. Anson Holmes seized the horses by the head, while others shoved sticks between the spokes of the wagon wheels. The black women stood in a solid mass in front of the horses to stop their progress. A scuffle ensued ; shots were fired by some of the guard, and poor Anson Holmes, the yellow boy in whose veins ran the most heroic blood, dropped dead.

The Englishman, who was watching proceedings, at once went into the crowd, took his old pupil up into his arms, and carried

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him out to a retired spot. Efforts were made to restore him to life, but in vain.

Brave Anson! he did not give his life in vain; in the excitement Moseby got his handcuffs off, and leaped out of the wagon.

At that instant Aunt Susan Carter ordered Chloe, a powerful negro woman, to throw her arms around the waist of the deputy-sheriff, and hold him fast. At the same time she stood herself on a wagon calling upon her people in the wildest and most impassioned strains of oratory to rescue the captive, even at the cost of their lives.

The prisoner had the sympathy of the whites as well as of the blacks. It was generally thought the gaoler had put on his handcuffs so loosely that it was small trouble to get them off. He also had friends among the sheriff's posse, who made but a show of resistance to the crowd of coloured people, and Washington Moseby made good his escape into the forest.

That evening, some hours after the Englishman had returned and was in bed, he was aroused by a rap on his door. Opening it there confronted him poor, shivering Washington Moseby.

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"I have been told, sah," said the man, addressing the Englishman, "that you represent the Lord Jesus Christ on this Peninsula. Will you take a poor wretch in and give him a night's shelter?"

He was a pitiable-looking object, cold, hungry, and his clothes from the scuffle he had been in were torn to rags.

The Englishman invited the poor fugitive in, gave him something to eat, and then spread a bed for him on the kitchen floor.

The next morning Washington Moseby started off from the Englishman's door clad in the blue swallow-tail coat and tight breeches which the latter had worn on the occasion of the Governor's dinner-party.

Nobody ever troubled Moseby again, and we heard very little more about him. But we grieved long and sorely for poor Anson Holmes.

Sallie was silently inconsolable, as was the nature of her people; I would find her at times gazing longingly and wonderingly into space, as if she would ask an explanation of the very winds as to the whereabouts of our old playmate.

CHAPTER XIII

GHOSTS AMONG THE TREES

THE white nights when the moon was large always filled me with wonder and delight. I imagined that many happenings took place in that mysterious light. On one such night I suddenly wakened to find my room flooded with light. I sat up on my elbow and gazed out through the small gable window which was opposite my bed. The trees stood ghostly in the soft light, and the stumps and shrubs seemed a more dimir tive form of spirit. Seeing these, I saw still more—a light in Joe Town's window. Musing about this light, my nerves tingled to know what Joe was doing that a light should be in his house at that hour. "It must be near midnight," I said aloud, "for I have been a long time asleep." I had become quite an expert at tree-climbing; there was a tree which grew very near to Joe's house, indeed overshadowing it, that had curious forked limbs, on which

I had often sat. I had taken split logs and nailed them across the prongs of the fork, and made a sort of platform where one could rest without fear of falling, and thus enjoy the company of the birds and the squirrels. If I were only on that platform I could see what Joe was doing.

It took me but a moment to jump from my bed, don one garment, slide from my window down the shed roof, and dash for the forked tree.

A few moments after I was settled in it Joe appeared at the open door of his house, where he stood for a second or two. Then he went to his stable near by, unlocked it, and harnessed a small black horse which he kept there. "Nothin' like a *black* horse, Pete," he had said once to me. "Can't be seen at night any distance."

"Why don't you want it to be seen?" I had inquired.

"Ah, that's the secret, Pete, which ye'll know when ye grow a few more inches on top o' yer head; that's the secret," he added winking.

He brought the horse to a small home-

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made wagon and hitched it. He talked to himself and swore at the moon in a most uncanny way, saying: "Ef it was a danged sight darker I could git the wheat with half the trouble." I suddenly grew afraid of Joe, and began to tremble for fear he might come and look for me in the tree-top. Instead of looking for me, however, he went into his house and brought out a number of sacks such as farmers used to carry wheat. Throwing them on the wagon, he mounted the seat and drove off. His dogs, Choke and Blood, were making a noise which was not much more than a whimper, and I knew that he had them tied up and closely muzzled, as I had seen him do before when he did not want them around.

I was trembling, I scarcely knew why. Joe's conduct was mysterious. I determined that as soon as he was out of sight I would climb down and run home.

I had slid half-way down the tree when I heard a slight sound—a crackling in the underbrush below me—and looking down I saw a large, gaunt, hungry-looking mother wolf sniffing her way along the familiar path I

had so often trod. She, no doubt, was out looking for some tit-bit to carry to her cubs, and was coming near the homestead in hope of finding a sheep or a lamb.

Fortunately I had hold of a limb, and with a shudder I struggled back into my seat and lay low. With a flash it came to me that I was not much larger than a good-sized sheep, and could just as easily be carried away to make a meal for the hungry cubs. My hearing and eyesight both in an instant became intensified. Every footfall of that wolf came distinctly to me; I saw every action.

The animal went up to my father's sheepfold, where he had his little flock closely penned, and sniffed audibly at the door, even scratching it fiercely with her long claws, and digging under the door, as if she would shake the very foundation of the building. Her need evidently was urgent. Failing at the sheepfold, she came back and, scenting my tracks, she trotted after them with her nose to the ground until she came to the very foot of the tree I had climbed. I held my breath, and tried to remember whether I had ever

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heard or read of a wolf that could climb a tree. What if I should fall off! It seemed to me at that moment that the very platform on which I was lying was dissolving under me. If I never really prayed before, I believe I prayed then.

My agony was not prolonged beyond endurance; the wolf, not being able to trace the tracks any farther, turned away and trotted out of sight. But what was I to do? She might be lurking around in ambush. I would not dare climb down to the ground, and I was too thinly clad for a night in the tree-top.

It had turned quite chilly, and my teeth were chattering audibly, to myself at least. I did not dare allow myself the luxury of even the thought of falling asleep, for fear I might roll off my platform.

I stayed an hour or more, wide-eyed and staring into the forest, suddenly become a fearful place, when I heard a new kind of sound. I rose on my elbow to listen, afraid to move my body to right or left, so possessed was I by the fear of falling off my platform.

The sound was travelling nearer, and it

was harmonious. This fact filled me with a great flood of comfort; surely there could not be anything in that concord of sweet sounds which would harm me. The echo in the woods was very great; the sound was carried far without being very distinguishable. Nearer travelled the sound, and I discovered that it was someone singing.

After awhile I could distinguish words :

"Where, oh, where are the Hebrew children?
Where, oh, where are the Hebrew children?
Where, oh, where are the Hebrew children?
Safe now in the promised land."

There was a short pause; then the singer continued :

"By and by we'll go home to meet them,
By and by we'll go home to meet them,
By and by we'll go home to meet them,
Safe now in the promised land."

Oh, the blessed words! What a flood of comfort they carried to my trembling heart! The Hebrew children were good people, I thought, quicker than I can say the words now; nobody singing about them could mean any harm. I determined that moment

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that I should appeal to this strange singer, who would have to pass right under my tree, and ask him to conduct me safely to my father's house.

On and on came the clear voice singing :

"Where, oh, where is good old Daniel?
Where, oh, where is good old Daniel?
Where, oh, where is good old Daniel?—"

"Mr. Singer! Mr. Singer!" I fairly screamed in my earnestness, "won't you, please, take me home?"

The singer instantly reined in his horse, which had only been slowly walking, and listened, wondering, as I afterwards heard him tell, whether he were being accosted by one of the Hebrew children, or even Daniel himself.

As quickly as I saw him stop, I slid down the tree and landed at his feet, or rather the feet of his horse.

"Boy," he said in one of the kindest yet firmest voices it ever has been my privilege to hear, "how came you to be here this hour of the night?"

"I—I came—I came to see—something,"

I stammered. "And there was a wolf passed through here and—I was afraid to come down out of the tree."

"To see something," he repeated, "to see something? Well," he added, after a short pause, "I was once a boy myself. I know something of a boy's imagination, his love of adventure, and desire to imitate. I played Robinson Crusoe once for a whole month. I'll not ask you what you came to see, but I'll ask you this, sonny: Was it to do anything sinful that you climbed that tree?"

"No, sir," I replied quickly; then I could say no more.

"What is your name?" he next asked.

"Peter Paul Thornton. I live over there," I said, pointing to my home.

"Peter Paul—you're in the succession," he said musingly.

"Yes," I replied. "I was called after both my grandfathers, and, so neither of them would feel neglected, mother gave me the two names."

"Well, I am John James Brown, a Methodist circuit rider," he returned. "I

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have been singing to drive away loneliness and to keep off the wolves. I was coming late from revival meetings, and in some way got lost, wandered, and I am only now coming to know my whereabouts."

"If you will stay right there until I run over home," I ventured to say, "I will climb that roof," pointing to the slanting woodshed roof against the side of the house, "and crawl in that window which you see open above it."

"Why not go in by the door?" inquired the Circuit Rider, with a slightly suspicious sound in his voice.

"I came out by the window," said I hesitatingly.

"Oh, that is the way, is it? Well, boys will be boys," he added, as if reflecting on something he had done himself in boyhood days. "Away you go, then. I'll stay here. But wait a bit, before we part, have you experienced a change of heart, Peter Paul?"

"No," I replied, somewhat mystified. "I think I have the same heart I always had."

He laughed. "It thumps the same, any-

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way, doesn't it?" he said cheerily. "You're not accustomed to Methodist phraseology. But does that heart love God better than anything else, Peter Paul?"

"I don't know that it does," I said, thinking how well I loved a great many things. "I say my prayers," I added, remembering how I had prayed in the tree when the wolf was underneath.

"Well, you must come to our meetings. We are going to start Methodist meetings up here in the school-house; you'll come, and in the meantime I'll pray for you, Peter Paul."

"If my father and mother will let me, I shall go," I replied.

(I might as well say here that my father flatly refused to allow me to go, saying, "I do not at all approve of those hysterical people called Methodists.")

"Well, scamper home now," said the Circuit Rider, "and I'll wait here until I see you climb in that window yonder."

As fast as my feet could carry me I ran the familiar path, climbed the shed-roof, turned and waved my hand to the Circuit Rider; then, climbing in the window, I stood

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watching him as he rode away until he passed entirely out of sight. He finished singing the verse of the hymn where he had left off, and the words came echoing through the trees :

"Where, oh, where is good old Daniel?
Safe now in the promised land."

The next evening 'Lizabeth Hannah, bursting with news, made us a visit. She said that Mary Martha had been wakened in the night by strange music—music such as she had never, never heard in these parts before; and that she—'Lizabeth Hannah—knew that that music had only one of two meanings: it was either a "ha'nt," or some one in the neighbourhood was going to die. She was more inclined to think it was a "ha'nt," for she had heard that such things were not uncommon in some parts of the New Country, and she saw no reason why one might not visit our part. She said that Mary Martha could not get over it all day; it had made such a powerful impression on her right in the dead of the night. Mary Martha said the music was sweet, too, and "kind o' cheery," and on that account she wondered

whether it could really be a "ha'nt"—she thought the music of the latter would have something regretful about it; "ha'nts" usually came back to lament.

I walked around to mother's chair and whispered into her ear:

"What is a ha'nt?"

"A spook or ghost," mother whispered back.

Not much wiser, I returned to my seat in front of the fireplace to listen further while 'Lizabeth Hannah talked.

The evening being chilly, father had built a fire in the fireplace, and we were all gathered around it.

"Sometimes," continued 'Lizabeth Hannah, "it is said that ha'nts spirits away things, and Jim Sykes, up here, says he's lost all of six or eight bushels of wheat last night, right out of the bin, slick an' clean, not a grain dropped. That's like a ha'nt's work."

Father intimated that there might have been grains dropped, and some birds come very early in the morning—or some small animals—and ate them up.

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"Oh," said 'Lizabeth Hannah, "ha'nts wouldn't drop a grain- just spirit the wheat away."

I sat with mouth open and eyes dilated, bursting with a desire to tell all I knew about the "ha'nt" and the wheat, but did not dare to do so. I think the principal reason why I did not tell was that I feared it might interfere with my pleasure in watching Joe's peculiar actions; then I was considerably afraid of Joe himself.

'Lizabeth Hannah continued to tell of some of the strange things that had been seen through the forest. A luminous vapour was said to have appeared more than once or twice over a grave. Then in another wayside burying-ground a human figure, it was told, came out and acted as if it had some intelligence it wished to communicate, but no one had ever stopped to listen to what it had to say.

'Lizabeth Hannah's stories seemed to arouse recollections of curious happenings which had come to father's ears, and even mother had something to add to the shivery tales. Before they had finished I had crept

from the outer circle of the fireplace to the inner, and, although feeling as though I were being roasted alive, I stayed there until 'Lizabeth Hannah started for home, father, with his gun over his shoulder, accompanying her.

"A gun is no good in case we meet a ha'nt," said 'Lizabeth Hannah, laughing nervously, when she bade mother good-night.

That night for the first time I hesitated about going in the dark up to my bedroom.

It became the fashion after that, for weeks, to spend the evenings around fireplaces—the season was rainy and a fire after dark was always agreeable—telling ghost-stories. Mary Martha's experience led every person that heard it to refurbish the ghost-lore he had in his possession, sometimes handed down to him from generations of ancestors.

Although I knew well the real ghost who furnished 'Lizabeth Hannah's thrilling tale, the foundation of all the other tales, I was greatly disturbed. I went around with staring, glistening eyes, and felt inclined to talk in whispers. The great woods, so long the place of dear delights, became an abode of dreaded

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"things." Not the delightful fairies and voices I had around me from the beginning, when alone in the woods, but other spirits, strange and fearsome. Without telling mother anything about it, I visited all the neighbours within a certain area to find out what they knew about ghosts or "ha'nts."

"Och, Pater Paul," said Peg Dooly, when I went to her cabin to ask her whether she believed in "really ghosts," "to be sure they's ghosts. There's the banshee, now, an' it's no end of thricks she do be playin'. I onct heerd av her goin' to a house an' standin' foreninst it, out amongst the trees and low bushes—this afther dark, mind you; the banshee does all her thricks afther dark—an' cryin' an' wailin' like a poor little baby left out in the rain. 'Run, Willie,' says the woman av the house to her little boy (just about your size, Pater Paul), an' see what poor baby that is cryin' out there.' An' Willie ran out, an' his poor disthracted, broken-hearted mother niver laid eyes on him agen. The banshee carried him off into the thick woods, just like this around us here, an' kep' him there; an' he grew up to be a wild

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man, runnin' everywhere without a ha'porth av clothes on him, eatin' snakes an' toads, an' frightenin' all the chilther av the place. Och, yes, Pater Paul, you kape an eye out afther dark for the banshee."

I next visited the home of Highland Malcolm, and asked him point-blank whether he thought there were any "really ghosts," or things of that kind. He smiled mysteriously, and his light blue eyes twinkled, while he said :

"Peter Paul, there are more things in this world than either you or I have ever dre'mt of."

"Hush, Malcolm!" said his wife. "Don't be makin' the boy wise before his time."

"You look out some moonlight night," continued Highland Malcolm, "at some bare spot in the woods where the trees have fallen and allowed the green grass to grow, an' see if ye don't catch a glimpse o' the fairies dancin' in the moonlight, aigh, by the hundreds; wee folk dressed in all the colours o' the rainbow. An' little brownies, too, ye can scarcely tell them from the withered leaves. But there they be. Ah, Peter Paul,

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this is a queer world you have got into, mighty queer!"

I next went to the Englishman, reluctantly indeed, for I disliked to let him know that I was afraid of anything; but I was determined to learn the truth about those mysterious people said to be with us and yet not of us.

"Do you believe," I said, making a bold dash into the question, one evening we were seated in front of his fireplace, "that there are any ghosts or spirits walking around among us?"

A curious light crept into his eyes; he did not answer for several moments, and appeared as if he might be looking for something thousands of miles away.

"Peter Paul," at last he said, as if his spirit had returned from some journey, "I haven't a doubt that if the film were but removed from our eyes we should see wonders."

How thankful I felt that the film held fast!

I endured some weeks of this agony. when one day while walking through the woods I

met the Circuit Rider. He knew me, and reined up his horse.

"Well," he said, "have you been climbing any more trees at midnight to see something, Peter Paul?"

"No, sir," I said plaintively, grieving over the bondage I had been brought into by the banshee, fairy, ghost, and spirit stories. Suddenly it occurred to me to ask the Circuit Rider whether he believed in spooks. "He is a good man, and wise," I reasoned, "and his opinion must be worth something." So I told him the whole story about Peg Dooly's banshee, Highland Malcolm's fairies and brownies, the Englishman's spirits, and 'Lizabeth Hannah's "ha'nts," he sitting patiently on his horse, and I standing awkwardly picking the bark off a white birch as I was talking.

"What about them, Peter Paul?" he said heartily, when I had concluded. "'The Angel of the Lord encampeth around about them that fear Him,' and He is stronger than any of them. Don't you forget that, Peter Paul." With this he gathered up his bridle and rode on.

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At that moment my heart ceased its nervous thumping and became more normal in its action. I went off to see the crane, which had been neglected for a long time; I thought there must be some connection between cranes and angels. They both had wings, and could fly; and they both were very mysterious and unapproachable.

A complete change came over me. I went out alone into the woods, and with clenched fists openly defied every banshee, fairy, brownie, spirit, spook, or "ha'nt" that ever troubled mankind, crying in a loud bullying voice: "The Angel can beat *you!*"

CHAPTER XIV

THE CHOLERA TIME

IN due time emigrants began to come fast from the Old Lands to find a home in the New. One summer the great majority came from Ireland for the purpose of seeking employment on some public works—the digging of a canal between two of the great lakes. They came from Cork and they came from Connaught, and they did not stop coming until they were hundreds strong, and the primeval peace of our peninsula was gone—gone for ever.

It was in a log shanty not many rods from our house that two Corkonians, Peg and Mike Dooly, set up housekeeping, and their friends and acquaintances were within visiting distance.

Peg on all occasions wore a white cap with full quilled border, which formed a sort of aureole around her flat Irish face, throwing into relief every feature. No matter how scant the other parts of her attire—short

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jacket, short flannel petticoat, bare feet—Peg was invariably crowned with her spotless, full-bordered headgear. Mike most of the time went bareheaded.

There was a long-standing feud in Old Ireland between the "Corks" and the "Connaughts," and as they fought there, they seemed to want to fight here. The men fought with shillelaghs, and the women fought each other with small stones tied in handkerchiefs. Mike Dooly used to entertain himself and others, when he had "a drop in," by trailing his coat in the mud and inviting his neighbours to tread on it, or strutting to and fro with a chip on his shoulder daring anybody to knock it off.

About this time there were a goodly number of negroes in the country—runaway slaves from the Southern States—and to dispose of them, and make them useful, the Government adopted the expedient of forming them into a company under a white captain to keep order among the Irish. The company was a hundred strong, and an imposing sight the strapping black men were when they donned the red uniform of the British soldier.

Candlelight Days

There had been many a small fight between the Corks and the Connaughts, but it was at what promised to be a very serious fight that the parish priest who came to the place with the Irish showed his power over his flock.

The air was clear and warm, befitting a day in June, and the woods surrounding our house were blue with wild pigeons, the boughs of some of the trees bending under their weight. Their cooing had drowned every other sound since four o'clock that morning. Suddenly a medley of strange sounds made even the pigeons unheard. The sounds seemed to come from the surrounding woods, which crept very close to our house in places.

"What can it be?" said mother, turning pale and hurrying to the door.

As mother opened the door she saw Peg Dooly flying toward it.

Peg was barefooted, and seemed to be not much more than half dressed. Her hair by reason of her running had fallen from under her white-bordered cap and was streaming in several untethered strands over her shoulders.

"The Corks an' Connaughts are out!"

she shouted while she was yet some distance from us, catching sight of mother. "Och! but there will be the bloody battle—the bloody battle! Ochone! Ochone!"

"Where is that coloured corps under the white captain?" said mother. "Cannot they put a stop to this?"

"Och, them nagers!" cried Mrs. Dooly indignantly. "Could ye expect an Irishman to shtop for thim? I'm shure Mike Dooly wud be found dead in his thracks before he wud be sthopped by a nager!"

While they had been hurriedly exchanging these few words, Peg meanwhile winding up her fallen hair and mopping the tears from her face, the noise of the rioters drew nearer.

They were coming along the highway, bordered on one side by the Chippewa Creek, and on the other side by the heavy forest; the noise was discordant and uproarious as the beating of tin pans and kettles could make it, and through the noise and discord we could occasionally catch a snatch of a belligerent Irish song.

In a short time the Corks had come in view—a motley crew in working clothes,

"smocks," and rough corduroy trousers. Many of them were bareheaded, and their dishevelled locks added much to their wild appearance. They were armed with guns, hoes, rakes, scythes, and other farming implements, which they had stolen from the farmers the night before, and had sharpened by the light of the moon.

"Och, they will be killin' wan anither next!" cried Peg, throwing her apron over her head. "An' my man Mike is among thim!"

At that instant there appeared in the distance the company of coloured men with the white captain at their head, riding fast toward the advancing mob.

Peg, through a hole in her apron, saw the black men in the red coats approaching, and throwing up her arms, she jumped a foot off the ground and screamed:

"Och, murther! murther! the nagers will be firin' into thim next! The black varmints!"

Nearer still were the Connaughts, and they and the Corks were only a few rods apart, when there dashed past our door a rider on a black horse. He was a short thick-set man, with swarthy complexion and black

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hair. He wore a felt hat, the crown crushed down tightly on to his head to keep it from flying off with his furious riding, the brim looped up to give it the appearance of a three-cornered hat. Galloping through the ranks of the Corks, who made way for him, he reached a space where he suddenly drew up his horse, and glanced from one faction to the other.

Jumping to the ground he grasped the stock of his whip and drew a line in the dust across the road. Then mounting his horse again he shouted in stentorian tones (as soon as they had seen him the Irishmen had stopped singing and rattling their tin pans):

"The furst man av you that sets fut across this line, I'll blow out the candles av the Church against him!"

But the blood of the Corks was up, and they marched right along /until their toes touched the line the priest had drawn in the dust; then they came to a dead stop.

The latter, seeing their stiff-neckedness, rode in among them and laid his riding-whip right and left over their shoulders.

At this they turned around and meekly

marched home, without ever a song or a rattle of a tin pan.

The many people coming across seas about this time brought to our country that dread disease, the Asiatic cholera. Everybody's heart quaked before it, and the people walked around with pale faces, talking in whispers.

"Do not tech any o' the fruit that is growin' on the trees or vines, Peter Paul," said Solomon Slater through a cloud of smoke, as I sat talking with him on the porch of his house. "I heerd over in the Old Country, when I was a boy, that the cholery germs settle on the ripe fruit, an' that ye can take them into yer body by eatin' the fruit."

This was a great trial to me; this year of all years the wild plums looked particularly tempting. They were large and luscious, and the branches hung low, and I imagined they were almost soliciting me to unload their burden.

I told this to Solomon, but he took out his pipe to say more seriously, "Don't tech 'em, boy!"

Although I was never very sure whether this was simply a superstition of Solomon's, I never tasted a plum.

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The first one on our peninsula to be stricken by the cholera was our near neighbour, Mike Dooly. Mike had been off where he had met some newly arrived emigrants, and came home carrying, all unconsciously, the germs of the cholera. One day when close to our house he fell to the ground, groaning like one mortally stricken.

He was taken up by two of his companions and carried in to receive mother's ministrations, for by this time it had become a recognised fact that the House on the Hill-top kept a continuous helping hand outstretched to the world at large.

The character of his disease was not known, but there was one universal cure for everything at that time.

"If we only had someone here to bleed him!" said my father.

Fortunately the Englishman, whom everyone called in case medical attention was required, was just passing the house, and mother, seeing him, beckoned him in.

Immediately on seeing the suffering man, the Englishman drew from his pocket a small spring lance, which he always carried to have

in an emergency, and baring Mike's arm, he struck the lance into the hollow in front of his elbow.

When the sufferer had lost half a pint of blood, the wound was bound up, and he was given two opium pills. Then, in a half-fainting condition, poor Mike was laid back on the pillows.

"He'll be all right now," said the Englishman; "there's nothing like bleeding. It is good for fevers, and it is good for chills."

I was struck with horror at seeing the bleeding of Mike. What if Ishbel should get the cholera, and that much blood had to be drawn from *her* little white arm? And while the other members of the family were engaged bringing Mike back to life, I found a quill pen, and dipping it into the blood—contained in a small earthen vessel—which was drawn from Mike's arm, I wrote on a piece of white birch bark (I thought it would add to its weight to write the message with blood):

"DEAR ISHBEL,

"Be very sure not to eat any of the plums, grapes, or berries growing out-

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doors ; they have got cholera germs on them.

“ Your obedient servant,

“ PETER PAUL THORNTON.”

I gave this epistle into the care of the Englishman before he left the house, and he promised faithfully to see that it fell into the hands of Ishbel, although I had misgivings that there was a smile lurking about his lips when he read the message.

In his pocket the Englishman also carried, in a box with small air-holes in the cover, two large black leeches, which he used when it was not convenient or safe to use a lance.

When 'Lizabeth Hannah “ caught ” a terrible cold, which resulted in one of the glands of her neck becoming badly swollen, the Englishman placed the leeches on the swollen part. “ For,” said he, “ I do not like to do any cutting in the region of the neck, among all those important veins and arteries ; I might not be able to stop the flow as easily as I can start it. But these little black surgeons can do the work and cut no vein.”

When their sides looked very much dis-

tended he would take them off and throw them on a plate of salt. This had the effect of making them disgorge what they had sucked, and they were ready to be placed on the injured part again to go on with their work.

"Peter Paul," whispered Mary Martha into my right ear, when the Englishman was applying the leeches to her sister's neck—he had allowed me to accompany him on this visit of ministry—"if I am ever sick, mind you, do not let them put those crawling things on me, *mind you*, Peter Paul; let me die first! You'll be around, Peter Paul, with the Englishman, and if I am so bad that I cannot speak, do not let him do it."

I entered into a solemn promise, to prevent, if possible, leeches being ever put on Mary Martha's fair person.

Despite the bleeding and the opium pills very many died of the cholera. The sad procession of six men wending their way through the aisles of the trees to the small burying-place in the heart of the forest, a coffin covered with a white sheet on their shoulders, was a sight which could be seen several times a day.

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Sometimes an ox harnessed to a single wagon would haul the coffined body through the woods, while the mourners walked in solemn file behind it, the very trees seeming to sigh in sympathy with sad human hearts.

The mortality was largest among the Corks, and, much to the grief of their friends, many had to be buried without any "wake" or any special masses. The parish priest was busy from dawn until dark with his large flock, reading the Burial Service over newly digged graves; but he could not succeed in going around to all of them. In some instances the Circuit Rider would read a few words over the grave of one of the priest's flock.

"Better have on'y a Methodist pr'acher read the wurds over a dead corpse, thin put him in the ground like a brute," I heard one man say apologetically to another.

"Blur an' uns!" said Mike Dooly, when he heard this. "Whin the Angel av the Resurrection stands over the graves av this peninsula, an' cries wid a loud voice, 'Awake, ye dead, an' come to judgment!' I'd hate terrible to be wan av thim Catholics that

the Methodist pr'acher read down into the ground! But, p'rhaps," he added in a moment, "they'll be excused as it was a cholery time."

"Och, Pater Paul," said Peg Dooly to me one day I called to see her in her cabin, "the banshee is to be seen ivery night now on wan av thim new made graves, sittin' there as large as life, an' twicst as nachural. Kape in the house wid ye, boy, av nights. And Pater Paul, if ye do be a Protestant I'd advise ye to cross yerself ivery time ye pass a grave. Do it now, cushla macree—it won't do ye no manner av harrum, an' it might do even a Protestant some good. You're on'y a child yet, an' won't be blemt fur bein' a Protestant, whin ye don't know no better."

That same evening around our fireplace I heard Barney McGee's father tell of a certain Patsy Lynch who went to confession to a priest. Patsy told a long story of sin and crime, and when he got through the story the priest said:

"Did ye ever do anny good at all since yer last confession?"

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"Yes, yer Riverence, I shot an Orange-man."

"Och, thin," said the priest, "that wipes out all yer sins an' crimes, Patsy."

Each of these stories came from a friend of mine, and I was very much puzzled as to whether a Protestant or a Catholic was the less wicked.

"Oh, listen to the Wind Spirit, Peter Paul," said Mary Martha one day when there had been many funerals. "He's lamentin' the dead. He knows all about the lone graves out there in the dark forest. He's sobbin' an' sighin', sobbin' an' sighin', Peter Paul!"

That night, when mother was tucking me into bed, the wind was sobbing and sighing down *our* chimney.

"That sad wind!" I said. "I wish he would stay away from *our* chimney."

"The wind in the chimney is God's own harmony, little Peter Paul," said my mother.

During all the period that the cholera lasted the Englishman kept steadily waiting on the ailing.

"He seems to bear a charmed life," said

my mother, "and goes in and out among the plague-stricken, bleeding scores, administering help and comfort to everyone who requires his aid. What can be keeping that man of means away from his kith and kin in this unfledged country?"

"If ye'll believe me," said 'Lizabeth Hannah, who had been listening to mother, "when I see him waitin' on his poor stricken fellow-bein's, I can't help thinkin' o' them Bible-verse words: 'A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, an' a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.'"

As for the impression made upon myself, I never see a picture of Atlas carrying the world on his shoulders without thinking of the Englishman.

"There's a woman doin' the same fer the Injuns that the Englishman is doin' fer the whites." Joe imparted this piece of information to me one day I sat in his cabin watching him clean his gun, preparatory to a fresh tramp through the forest. "Bleedin' 'em, an' leechin' 'em, an' givin' 'em opium pills, jest same's Doc does fer white people."

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Joe had been restless since the outbreak of the cholera, and spent most of his time wandering the forest world, covering a wide area in his tramp. There was little transpiring in that world that he did not know something about.

"Who is she?" I demanded.

"That's what I'm wantin' to find out," returned Joe. "She must 'a told the Injuns to keep mum; they won't answer a question about her."

"I want to see her," said I.

"Well, come along with me, an' we'll slip up on the sly, an' p'raps we'll ketch a sight o' her."

I was ready, and we started off a second time together for a long tramp through the woods.

After a time we reached a large Indian encampment. We tried to step noiselessly as we approached, but Indians have wonderful hearing. One glanced up from his work of making a bow and arrow, and must have passed the warning of our approach around, because a graceful white woman dressed in the Indian costume of short buckskin skirt,

with neat leggings and moccasins, suddenly turned and disappeared in a tent which stood by itself, and evidently was for her use alone.

I caught one glimpse of her face (Joe at that moment tripped over a knot and missed seeing the face), and I knew at once that it was the same I had seen during the lacrosse game at Niagara—the face of the beautiful woman in white which had haunted my day and night dreams for a long time.

I was about to tell this to Joe, when I remembered my promise and kept silent.

We drew near the camp, and Joe began to question the Indians. He could get nothing out of them, however; indeed, they grunted and mumbled in a way that showed us that our presence was not desired, and we thought it the better part of valour to retire, and make our way home as fast as possible.

After awhile the cholera cloud was lifted, and we resumed our old manner of life. The Irish now had time to "wake" their dead,

and bury them with the amount of mourning and ceremony they thought becoming.

It was during this period that Peg Dooly's mother—whom she had brought to this country as soon as Mike had earned enough money to allow her to do so—died. Peg was determined that no honour due to the dead should be wanting at the obsequies of her mother, so she travelled for miles around the country borrowing all the candlesticks the householders possessed. Then she made candles enough out of tallow to fill all the candlesticks.

It was she who routed Mike out of his sleep at four o'clock in the morning, and sent him out into the bush with his flintlock over his shoulder to hide behind a stump and watch for a deer.

After half an hour's watching Mike espied a handsome buck approaching, and taking good aim over the top of the stump, he laid him low. Skinning and dressing the carcass, he carried home the tallow, and presented it to Peg.

The latter rendered the tallow, and borrowing some tin moulds from the neighbours, she

drew wick through them, poured in her melted tallow, and when it was cool, drew out as fine-looking candles as ever flickered solemnly at a wake.

A due number of the candles were placed around the lamp black-stained coffin, and the remainder were kept to illuminate the place for the company which was expected to fill the house for two nights at the waking of the dead. Peg almost forgot her grief at losing her "only mother," so ambitious was she to have that wake excel all other wakes that had been in that part of the country. One "indispensable" of a good wake was whisky, so whisky Mike was obliged to provide by the gallon. To accompany the latter, at the lunch, always given at midnight, Peg made cakes of great variety—cakes with currants, and cakes with raisins, and cakes without either currants or raisins.

As it was expected, about dusk the house began to fill. Seats had to be provided for the company by placing long boards, or split logs, with blocks for supports. The men—for only men attended the wake—seated themselves side by side in respectful silence,

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some leaning over with their elbows on their knees. And so they sat all night, never exchanging a word, and only moving when someone liable to be overcome by sleep lighted his pipe for a smoke. At midnight the cake and whisky were passed, and after the lunch the mourners engaged for the occasion—some in the neighbourhood were so skilled in this accomplishment that they officiated at many funerals—began the Irish lament for the dead.

This was really a heartbreaking cry, as heartbreaking as could be produced, and there seemed to be something infectious about it, for it drew tears and sobs from many in the assembly who were not engaged to do the mourning.

The funeral took place the following day, or the day following two nights of "waking," and at this the whisky was passed freely. "Out of respect for the dead," few of the men went home sober.

All this account of the wake and the funeral I got from Joe Town, for he was at both.

"Pete," said he, "wouldn't I be a fool not to go to all the Irish wakes and Irish

funerals, as long as they give a feller as good whisky an' cake as Mike Dooly an' his old woman set before us?"

There was no more regular member on the pay-roll of the canal diggers than the "grog man," and none whose feet, coming over the mountains of clay thrown up, looked more beautiful to the Irish diggers.

Each pay day the parish priest walked around in the footsteps of the paymaster exacting a tithe to the amount of one dollar from each man as soon as he had received his money.

On one such day Mike Dooly, feeling poorer than usual—it was after his mother-in-law's wake and funeral—and having a vision of how much whisky a dollar would buy, said meekly, "I've none to give ye to-day, yer riverence."

"Ye have none to give, haven't ye?" returned the priest, disapproval in his tone. Then, drawing back a few yards, he picked up a handful of clods, and began to throw them at Mike.

After a few clods had hit him in the head and chest, nearly knocking the breath out of

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him, Mike put his hand in his pocket and drew out his dollar.

"Oh, the parish priest is the one who can keep those Irish in order, better than a whole regiment of other men," I overheard my father say. "The Government is going to give him a tip for his services to the country in maintaining peace and order among those rascals, and he richly deserves it."

The hatred which the Irishmen had for the black soldiers seemed to grow more intense with the passage of time. They resented bitterly the fact that they were supervised by a negro regiment, and it was not safe for any member of the company to wander around alone.

One evening a number of Irishmen, among whom was Mike Dooly, were walking home from their work when they learned that three or four members of the black regiment were drinking in a small tavern, situated on the canal bank, which they had to pass.

This was the Irishmen's chance. They immediately made a rush for the tavern, with the intention of giving the "nagers a b'atin'." The black men, being few in

number, thought it the better part of valour to fly out through a rear door. In the backyard they sought shelter behind a large pile of stove wood. Here the Irishmen found them, and the two parties, having no other missiles, began throwing the wood at each other.

In the *mêlée* a heavy oak chunk struck Mike Dooly on the head, and he fell to the earth never to rise again.

Peg, as "a lone widdy woman," was greatly commiserated by all her own country people. But she had her pig and her chickens, and these, along with her "pratie patch," gave promise of tiding her over the first winter of her widowhood.

A short time after the burial of Mike a new calamity befell Peg. Another survey was made in the interests of the canal; its proposed course was slightly changed, and the new route was directed right through the heart of Peg's shanty, which was built on the Government land. Peg was notified to move, but she regarded the injunction in vain, tossed her head, and stoutly declared that she would not budge an inch, "Gouvermint or no Gouvermint."

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The labourers dug away until they came up to the very board-walls of Peg's shanty, inside of which the mistress, who had planted a chair in the middle of her one room, sat grim and determined, holding on to each side of her seat, not even her white-ruffled cap border showing a quiver of weakness.

After remonstrating with her in vain, two of the men, instructed by their "boss," laid down their shovels, entered the shanty, and lifting the chair and the little Irishwoman occupying it, they carried them out and deposited them in the heart of her potato patch.

The other labourers at the same time busied themselves carrying out her few pieces of furniture and pulling down her board shanty, Peg, in the meanwhile, with tears and loud wails, calling curses down on their heads.

The same evening, after they had quit their work on the canal, the men who had pulled Peg's shanty down erected it again a few yards farther in on the Government land. And Peg gave them all her blessing.

CHAPTER XV

THE BUSH FIRE

THE final clearing out of the cholera germs, it was generally thought, was effected by the "bush fire." There was always a good deal of danger of forest fires during summer and early autumn, and great precaution was exercised not to start one. If a fire got headway at all, large numbers of men turned out with buckets to carry water, and axes to cut down the trees; everything was done to extinguish the fire. But the autumn following the cholera everything failed—the people were more careless and apathetic; so the great fire got headway, took the forest in its teeth, and shook it almost to extinction.

It started some distance from our immediate locality, and we were not much alarmed about it.

"It will be subdued before it reaches us," father had said confidently, to allay mother's fears, one morning when we awoke to find

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our neighbourhood shrouded in smoke. "It is just the wind that has brought this smoke here ; the fire is far away."

Father had yet to learn by experience what a marvellously fleet-footed courier the wind is. That same morning he and the Englishman rode off to Niagara, the nearest village where groceries, and other household and farm necessities could be procured. They started in the morning, and the wind continued to rise all day.

In the afternoon mother, seeing the smoke had become more dense, began to worry about the fire, and to wish that father would hurry home.

"I'll go out to meet him," I said, "and hurry him home. I know the way to Niagara."

Mother made no reply, and, slipping out of the door unnoticed by her, I started off on my tramp along the road through the woods.

I walked for an hour, and began to notice great waves of heat coming toward me. After awhile I heard the crackling of timber, and looked up to see a glare of light in the sky, as if the very heavens were on fire.

Then suddenly the noise of flying feet smote my ear, and many a strange and dreadful cry as the wild things fled past me. A great grey wolf, with terror in its eye, coursed within a few feet of me; and the frightened deer almost trampled on me. Hogs, wild-cats, and many smaller animals swelled the flying throng, and I heard above me the quack of the wild goose, and the weird cry of many another bird.

Seized with terror, I started to run back toward home. But I was soon out of breath, sobbing, and had to quiet down to a walk, and a slow walk at that. In a short time the fearful crackling and hissing of the fire through the great timbers was quite distinct. I knew that it would soon be madly tearing down each side of the road on which I walked, and I sought the very middle of it so as to be as far away from the flames as possible.

A forlorn little creature I was in my brown linen suit, through which I was already feeling the terrible heat, crying aloud with fright.

Mother, about an hour after I had left home, noticed the unwonted quietness of the house, and began to look about for me. She

inquired of Sallie, but the latter had been busy spinning flax, and did not know anything about me. Just then it came faintly to mother's recollection that she had heard me saying something about going for father, and almost fainting with apprehension, she hurried out to the main road, calling me by my name as she went.

"Och, Mrs. Thornton, lady," cried Peg Dooly, running toward mother—she had just discovered the coming of the fire, and was on her way to tell mother—"your little Pater Paul will be all burnt up entoirely; he walked off down that road," pointing with her extended arm toward the road I had taken, "an hour ago."

Mother began to cry and wring her hands, and just at that moment the Circuit Rider, travelling a cross-road, galloped up beside the two women.

Seeing mother's distress, he drew rein, and inquired her trouble.

"Oh, sir," said mother, "my little boy has gone off down that main road, and the fire is travelling fast in this direction. I fear he will be caught in it."

"Yes," said Peg Dooly, "her little Pater Paul wint off down there an hour ago or more, an' he'll be all burnt up entoirely, so he will!"

"Peter Paul," said the Circuit Rider, "a friend of mine. I rescued him once—I can do it again. Give me one of your husband's suits of woollen clothes," he added, addressing mother.

The two hurried into the house, and the Circuit Rider, being a slimmer man than my father, hastily pulled the latter's woollen trousers over his own. He then exchanged his linen coat for the woollen one. Then he crowded a woollen cap down on to his head, and mounting his horse, he galloped away out of sight toward the burning woods.

Mother dropped to the ground on her knees, and Peg Dooly crossed herself, and drawing from her bosom a string of prayer beads she began to pass them through her fingers rapidly, while her lips muttered words unintelligible to human ears.

I was feeling the heat intensely through my linens, and crying louder in my great terror, when I heard the frantic beat of horse's

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hoofs, and looking up I saw the Circuit Rider beside me.

He bounded off his horse and gathered me into his arms; and at that instant his pony, snorting with terror, tore the bridle out of his master's hand, and turning madly galloped toward home.

The Circuit Rider made one dash after his horse, then seeing the hopelessness of trying to catch him, he turned, and with whitening face looked for a moment at the oncoming fire. Then he said calmly: "Well, Peter Paul, you and I and God are alone in this fire."

He saw me shrinking from the heat of the great fire, which was now pretty close to us, and taking off his woollen coat, he wrapped it around me. Then, drawing a jack-knife from his pocket, he went into the very centre of the road, where it was the widest, and where it was farthest from the trees, and began scooping hastily a hole in the ground, loosening the earth with the knife in his right hand, while with his left he gathered it out.

The ground was somewhat soft, the soil being largely leaf-mould, and it was not long before he had dug a large hole.

"There, Peter Paul," he said, "put your face down in that, and I will spread the coat all over you, only leaving you a breathing place; so that when the fire is sweeping past on each side of us, you may be protected from the great heat.

"What are *you* going to do, Mr. Circuit Rider?" I said, for I noticed that he seemed to be concerned only about *my* welfare."

"Put down your face and you shall see," he returned.

After he had fixed me very securely, he began with his jack-knife and hands to dig the hole larger and wider.

"This is for *my* face, Peter Paul," he said cheerfully, when it was completed.

It was done none too soon, for I heard him almost groan as he dropped his face into the moist earth.

Then with his hands he continued to scratch up earth and pile it on my back, and on his own. I was pretty well protected by the woollen coat, but he had nothing but his linen shirt between his back and the awful heat.

The hordes of flame came on, seizing the

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trees on each side of the road ; the heat grew more intense, some belated wild animals still continued to rush past us, and a few birds fell dead at our feet. Amidst the uproar I heard the Circuit Rider praying :

“ O God, I am Thine for service or for sacrifice—but the boy’s mother ! ”

Night came on, although I could not have known it had the Circuit Rider not told me, the glare in the sky was so great ; and, caused no doubt by my fatigue, the great heat, and being so closely wrapped up, I was overcome by sleep.

I awoke many times in the night, hearing the hiss of the flames and the crackle of falling timbers, and feeling the Circuit Rider piling clay on my back.

He was uttering words, whether praying or not I did not know ; but I wondered where God could be to let all this go on and not put a stop to it.

At the first streaks of dawn the Circuit Rider awoke me.

“ Peter Paul,” he whispered, “ the force of the fire has gone past us. I think we might start to walk home now, and relieve your

mother. She may be fretting about you, my dear boy."

I stirred myself and rose to my feet, cramped, but not even a hair of my head had been touched by the fire. But the poor right hand of the Circuit Rider, that had reached out so often to cover me with the moist clay, was blistered badly.

His back was also blistered, and he seemed very much cramped, but he said cheerily :

"Peter Paul, we're alive; our day's work is not done. I have a few blisters, but I do not think there is anything vital touched. I am not burned over half my body, and that has to occur before the burn proves fatal. Let us limber up now and walk home; the sight of you will give your mother an appetite for her breakfast."

On each side of us the tall blackened trunks of trees were standing like spectres of woe, all the green foliage and light shrubbery had been swallowed by the greedy flames, but the heavy tree-trunks still stood, charred and smoking. I shuddered at the sight of desolation, and gratefully shoved my hand into the clasp of the Circuit Rider's

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large fingers, when he extended to me his unburnt left hand.

We walked very slowly. Evidently the Circuit Rider's burns were painful, although he did not complain, and we were both weak with hunger, having had nothing to eat since noon the day before.

When we were drawing near the locality of my home we saw that it had escaped the flames—the wind, which was strong, carrying the sheets of fire just east of it. I laughed with delight, as also did the Circuit Rider, when we recognised the old grey zigzag fence which outlined our place, the log barn, the chip-strewn dooryard, and our weatherworn log cabin.

Mother clasped me in her arms when we presented ourselves at the door, and looked up to thank the Circuit Rider; but, instead, she fell fainting at his feet.

"Och, the poor widdy!" cried Peg Dooly, who had spent that awful night trying to comfort mother, wringing her hands idly, while the Circuit Rider went about restoring the fainting, "for it's her husband, it is, that's all burnt up entoirely in this awful fire, bein'

as he an' the Englishman wint ridin' off yesterday right to their dooms, poor craythurs!"

Just as mother was returning to consciousness, father and the Englishman rode up, their horses all covered with lather. They had seen the course of the fire before starting for home, and had remained all night in Niaga a. With morning they had hastened home to assure mother of their safety.

Mother was only kept from fainting again by some of the Englishman's medicine, which he always carried in a flask in his pocket—the same that made Long Tom hilarious, and plunged Highland Malcolm into gloom.

Father and the Englishman were introduced to the Circuit Rider, and I tried to tell them about our night's experience.

Father walked over and extended his hand to my rescuer, the Englishman following him, and with faltering voice the former said:

"My dear sir, I wish to become better acquainted with you; I am eternally your debtor."

Then he noticed the terrible burns of the

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Circuit Rider and said, "Grey, do get to work and dress these up, they must be agonising!"

With almost professional skill, the Englishman went about dressing the burns, and applying salve, until the sufferer was as comfortable as possible.

"Mrs. Macfarlane has a receipt for a balm-of-Gilead salve, which she says is a great healer," said my mother. "Run over to their place and get it, Peter Paul, and I will begin at once to make the salve."

I had had my breakfast, and was thoroughly rested, so I hurried off along the well-known path to the Macfarlane home, singing as I went. But when I arrived there, such was the commotion that I forgot my errand entirely. A messenger had come to the Macfarlane house telling the old man and woman there that a report had gone all through the country that Alec Macfarlane, their son, because of a quarrel he had with some of the hunters and trappers, had set the woods afire to drive away the game. Among some of the rougher set, who did not know him very well, the feeling ran high against him, and before twenty-four hours

had elapsed they had saddled horses, armed themselves with pistols, and gone in pursuit of Alec.

Highland Malcolm and his wife, bare-headed and dishevelled, rushed along the path through the woods, in the direction indicated by the messenger as the place where they would find their son, I, keeping pace with them, a few yards behind.

The posse of men had found Alec in a thicket of wood, not many rods from his home, to which he was returning, quite unconscious of the evil eye his neighbours were casting upon him. They had covered him with pistols, and flung one end of a rough rope around his neck, throwing the other end over the limb of a tree.

They were plying him with questions as to his guilt, but although the parts of his face not covered by the bristling beard were ashen in colour, and he thought that death was staring him in the face, he refused to answer a word.

The men were arguing with each other, some apparently afraid to proceed with their evil work, and others urging that they delay

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no longer, when Alec's father and mother arrived on the scene. Alec told us all this afterwards.

The mother, as soon as she saw him, rushed at once to her son, threw her arms around his neck, called him her baby, and lifting the corner of her blue gingham apron, she began to wipe the great drops of clammy sweat from his brow. Highland Malcolm took his place on the other side of Alec, and raising his right hand up toward heaven, and throwing back his bared grey head, he cried :

“ Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man : preserve me from the violent man. Which imagine mischiefs in their heart ; continually are they gathered together for war. They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent ; adder's poison is under their lips. Keep me, O Lord, from the hands of the wicked ; preserve me from the violent man ; who have purposed to overthrow my goings. The proud have hid a snare for me, and cords ; they have spread a net by the wayside ; they have spread gins for me. I said unto the Lord, Thou art my Gcd : hear the voice of my supplications, O Lord. O God the Lord, the

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strength of my salvation, Thou hast covered my head in the day of battle. Grant not, O Lord, the desires of the wicked : further not his wicked device ; lest they exalt themselves. As for the head of those that compass me about, let the mischief of their own lips cover them. Let burning coals fall upon them : let them be cast into the fire into deep pits that they rise not up again——”

The lynchers glanced furtively at each other, and one by one they began to walk away, until the old people were left alone with their son. But the old man never stopped his prayer until he had finished the psalm.

When he was through he opened his eyes, and lifting the coarse rope from his son's neck, without any expression of surprise that the evil-doers had fled, he said :

“ My son, come away home with thy father and thy mother.”

An hour later the skirlings of the bagpipes were heard resounding through the woods, giving expression to some of the wildest and weirdest of Highland melodies, and my mother remarked to my father :

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"There's poor old Highland Malcolm playing his triumphal march."

It was shortly after this that one evening, while seated in front of the Englishman's fireplace, I saw him open and read a letter, the purport of which none of us knew until years afterwards. The letter was from his solicitor in England, stating that an uncle, Lord Grey, had died, and that he, Godfrey Grey, as next of kin, was heir to the title and estate.

The Englishman folded the letter when he had read it, and, looking into the fire, his face softened in a wonderful manner. Then he rose to his feet, and walked the floor back and forth in long strides. He seemed to have forgotten my presence, and gave utterance to these words:

"Go back to England—a title—luxurious living—and Margaret in this wild new country—an impossible act to contemplate!"

He continued his walk until the fire burned down to a bed of coals. Then I, glad to have some excuse for talking to him—in truth feeling it bordering on the uncanny to be all alone with that strange-acting man, cried sharply:

"The fire needs more pine knots!"

He stopped his stride, stooped, and piled some great knots on the embers; then, sitting down in front of it, his face again softened as he continued to gaze into the heart of the pure flame; and, as if still forgetful of my presence, he said aloud:

"I shall never go back to England without Margaret—*never!* Poor little Margaret wandering this wilderness alone!"

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CHAPTER XVI

MARY MARTHA

FATHER insisted on the Circuit Rider staying at our home until his burns were healed. Up in my half of the attic another bed was arranged for him, and I had the rare pleasure of his company for two weeks. Under the Englishman's orders he kept his bed for a week ; then he was allowed to sit up in his chair.

Some of his church people called to see him the day after the accident, and one of his adherents said to him in a half whisper, which I, seated over in another corner of the room, was supposed not to hear :

" It's most unfortunate, brother, that you have to be shut up here for a length of time with these half dead and alive Presbyterians."

'Lizabeth Hannah came over the same day and said to mother, in an undertone, so as not to be heard upstairs :

" Of course, it's your duty to mind that

man, seeing as he saved the life of your son, but it's more than *I* could stand to have one o' them rantin' Methodists under *my* roof. I'm glad it was not Mary Martha he saved, and it's not I that am under the obligation to have him 'round."

I told the Circuit Rider what 'Lizabeth Hannah said the next time I was in his bedroom alone with him, and he laughed as heartily as his burns would allow.

"And what did Mary Martha say?" he asked, after thinking awhile.

"She was not here. Do you know Mary Martha?" I inquired.

"I have seen her; you remember one evening you and she, Peter Paul, were out picking flowers as I rode past."

"Isn't she a *beauty*?" I asked.

The Circuit Rider looked almost frightened, as if he feared he might be indulging in conversation of a vain or worldly character; then he replied:

"Like Sara of old, she is fair to look upon. Is she a Christian, Peter Paul?"

"Oh, yes," I said, "I know she is. She feeds all the starvin' dogs, and all the starvin'

cats, and puts the young birds back in the nests when they fall out ; and don't mind at all when 'Lizabeth Hannah bosses her."

"All that sounds like the fruits of the Spirit," returned the Circuit Rider with much interest.

"Does she often come here, Peter Paul ?" he next inquired.

"Yes," I said, "before *you* came. I do not know whether she will come now or not ; she's afraid of men, she says."

"So much the better when she's so good-looking. They'll not be afraid of her I'll warrant," he said, thinking out loud.

"No," I said. "Alec Macfarlane comes around where she is as often as he can get a chance."

"Eh ?" said the Circuit Rider sharply ; and I had to say my last sentence over again.

"Alec Macfarlane comes around," he repeated. "And is Mary Martha afraid of *him* ?"

"Oh, no," I said. "She sees him too often for that."

The Circuit Rider drew a long breath.

The next day that Mary Martha came over to our house, I, thinking that it would please the sick man, persuaded her to go out into the woods to gather wild flowers to decorate his room.

We brought in handfuls of purple asters, yellow golden-rod, blue-fringed gentian, pink convolvulus, and cardinal flower, and Mary Martha arranged them in all the dishes mother could spare. When they were ready I carried them upstairs to the Circuit Rider's room, saying: "See what Mary Martha picked for you, and I picked some, too."

He was so pleased with them, and sent down to Mary Martha such hearty thanks, that, while he stayed with us, every time she tripped through the woods to our place she picked handfuls of the flowers, which I was careful to carry upstairs.

The first time she came to the house after I had told her that the Circuit Rider was downstairs bolstered up in a rocking-chair, she wore a white dress, and had fastened a bunch of blue-fringed gentians at her belt, and in her hair. I never saw her look so well before, and I went around to the back of the

Circuit Rider's chair and whispered into his ear :

" Isn't she pretty ? "

And he with a very sober face, heaving a deep sigh, answered, " Very pretty."

She continued to come, always wearing flowers, and always looking pretty.

I believe the Circuit Rider hated to get well and have to go away where Mary Martha could no longer visit him.

" You hate to go away and leave us all, and Mary Martha," I said one day when I saw him looking very attentively at some flowers she had brought.

He started and the red flew to his face ; then he grew quiet and said, " Oh, Peter Paul, I must be about my Master's business."

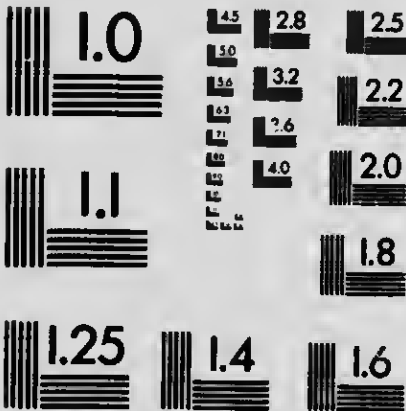
About this time even 'Lizabeth Hannah began to soften toward the Circuit Rider, for she brought him over some seed-cake and elderberry wine.

He was well enough to go away very soon after that, and the next meeting he held in the schoolhouse Mary Martha and I were among the congregation. My parents no longer objected to letting me go to Methodist



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meetings when Mr. Brown was the preacher, and I made Mary Martha go with me because I thought it would please him to have her there.

She listened very attentively to the sermon, but I heard nothing but an old man in the corner saying "Amen!" every few minutes.

When the congregation began to sing I was delighted; it was so much brighter and livelier than the singing in the Presbyterian church. Someone gave Mary Martha a hymn-book, and she and I sang heartily, along with "Brother Atkins," and "Sister Peaks," and other brethren and sisters:

"Ye virgin souls arise,
With all the dead awake:
Unto salvation wise,
Oil in your vessels take;
Upstarting at the midnight cry,
Behold the Heavenly Bridegroom nigh."

Before the meeting was closed there was an announcement of "Protracted Meetings" that were to be held some time the coming winter.

"We'll come, won't we, Mary Martha?" I whispered into her ear. She smiled in a way that I understood to mean "Yes."

"Wasn't that a *fine* sermon?" I said as soon as we were out of the building.

"Yes," replied Mary Martha dreamily.

The next day I watched for an hour to see the Circuit Rider pass, to tell him that Mary Martha thought his sermon *fine*.

He smiled, and turned red; and I, feeling that he was pleased, determined that I should get Mary Martha to say many things in like fashion, so I could tell them to him again.

Mary Martha was considerably younger than her sister, and before the family had come across from the United States she had attended a young women's school, and had received ideas thereby which were foreign to her sister. This was the way I had often heard my mother explain the difference between 'Lizabeth Hannah and Mary Martha.

'Lizabeth Hannah was a Presbyterian, and walked as often as weather permitted to the Presbyterian church. Mary Martha was apparently not so devoutly inclined; she went to the church only when she had an opportunity to ride.

"That's because she's got a 'Piscopal drop in her an' don't take to the Presby-

terians," said 'Lizabeth Hannah apologetically to mother. "Our grandmother on mother's side was English Church, and I always feared Mary Martha took after her. Of course, father made a Presbyterian of mother, an' I don't see why he won't let me make one of Mary Martha. I could say to her, 'Mary Martha, you *must* come to Presbyterian church,' an' then she'd do it, quick enough. But father says, 'Leave her alone, 'Lizabeth Hannah, to grow her own way,' he says—father's got queer in his old age—'it takes all kinds o' trees to make a purty forest,' he says; 'there's the oak, an' the hickory, an' the pine, an' the white birch, none o' them alike, an' yet all good in their way an' nice trees to look at.' He says—father's grown queer in his old age—'that Mary Martha always puts him in mind o' the white birch—nice to look at. Let her alone, 'Lizabeth Hannah,' he says, 'let her alone to grow her own way; you cared for her when she was a little saplin',' he says, 'kept her straight, did not let her be bent out o' shape by the wind, or get twisted up with other trees; but now that she is a good-sized and hardy

saplin', able to stand alone, let the tree develop accordin' to its kind,' that's what father says. 'White birches have their place in the world o' the woods as well as the hickory and the oak, and purty to look at any time you run acrost them,' he says; 'summer or winter, purty for the eyes to look at, and that's the way it is with our Mary Martha. And I have no doubt,' he says, 'that the birch in her way will do as much for the world as the oak, the pine, or the hickory.' He says that now in his old age everyone he looks at puts him in mind of some kind of tree; some are oaks, an' some are pines, some are hard wood, and some are soft; some will make good timber, an' some are only pulp. That's the way father talks. There's all sorts, he says, an' there's no use in tryin' to make folks all alike more than the trees of the forest."

After 'Lizabeth Hannah went away I pondered very seriously what she had been saying, and creeping back to mother I said:

"What kind of a tree is 'Lizabeth Hannah?"

Mother paused a moment, wrinkled her brow up into a little thoughtful frown, then

smiling, she said, "I think she is a shag-barked hickory."

In a few minutes I was back with another question :

"What kind of a tree is the Englishman ?"

Mother raised her eyes and looked away through the open door at the thousands of trees which whispered at our very doorstep, then she said :

"The Englishman is an oak, Peter Paul."

I ran away a second time, but was soon back with a third question :

"What kind of a tree am I ?"

"You're only a sprout yet, little Peter Paul, a sprout with two leaves," said my mother. "We cannot tell what kind of a tree you shall be until at least the third leaf appears. The child is the father of the man," she said to herself as I was walking away.

'Lizabeth Hannah never had very many charms for me ; she always wore her straight linsey-woolsey gown plain and unadorned, but Mary Martha pinned flowers on hers, walking miles if necessary to get them—pale, wild flowers in their season, and when they were gone, a bit of vine or autumn leaf.

Mary Martha

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'Lizabeth Hannah never tired of trying to decorate Mary Martha ; every bit of spare money she had was laid at Mary Martha's shrine, in the shape of small pieces of jewellery, strings of beads, or fancy ribbons. The latter seemed to prefer the flowers, and forgot to wear 'Lizabeth Hannah's trinkets, unless when reminded by her.

"Isn't Mary Martha the most beautiful woman you ever saw?" I one day asked the Englishman when alone with him.

"I know of but one more beautiful, Peter Paul," was his reply.

"Where is she?" I inquired hotly, for I resented the idea of anyone being more beautiful than Mary Martha.

"Oh, that I knew where I might find her!" said the Englishman, without looking at me, and it did not seem as if he were even addressing me.

"Shall I ever see her?" I demanded.

"It is the hope of my life that you shall, my son," he returned almost tenderly.

The Circuit Rider was obliged to go to some other part of his great parish, and we

did not see him for a length of time. But toward the close of the winter the Methodist "protracted meetings" began, and this work brought him to reside for some time in the vicinity.

Mary Martha and I arranged to attend the meetings together. It was not considered safe for us to go alone through the woods, so Mary Martha prevailed on her father, whom she could get to do anything she wanted, to act as our escort.

Our little procession through the woods went in this fashion. Solomon Slater walked ahead, with long shambling strides, carrying in his hand a brightly burning hickory torch, and in his mouth a large cob pipe stuffed full of beech leaves. From both torch and pipe a heavy cloud of smoke ascended in the clear winter air. Mary Martha and I, with clasped mittened hands, followed closely in his wake, stepping gingerly and glancing fearfully from right to left into the deep forest, whence echoed little crackling, mysterious sounds.

When the sounds were a little louder than usual Solomon Slater would look around and

remark, "The Old Man o' the Woods is abroad to-night; them's his steps."

Mary Martha and I would shiver, and walk closer together if possible.

Under her cloak Mary Martha carried a tallow candle in a massive brass candlestick, to help "light up" the schoolhouse.

When we reached the door of the schoolhouse Mr. Slater would leave us; nothing could induce him to enter.

"The Presbyterian church is enough for me," was all the explanation. he would give for his refusal to enter.

He would sit in front of some adjoining neighbour's fireplace until the meeting was over; then he would be on hand to walk home with us.

The first night we went Mary Martha and I stepped timidly into the schoolhouse, and dropped into seats near the door. A fire of pine stumps was burning in the great fireplace, and standing in front of it, his figure sharply outlined against the great sheets of flame, was the Circuit Rider. No candles were yet lighted.

The exercises proper had not begun, and

the silence was only broken at intervals by an occasional explosive "Amen!" or "Hallelujah!" Something in the weirdness of it all worked on my nerves, and clutching Mary Martha's skirt, I whispered sharply:

"Light your candle!"

Picking up the candle, Mary Martha stepped nimbly up to the great fireplace, and lighted it by touching the wick to the flame.

Then she came back and placed the candle on the window-sill right at my elbow.

At sight of her pretty slender figure displayed in the firelight, the Circuit Rider seemed inspired to give out a hymn, and in a few moments we were all singing:

"Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore."

Following the example set by Mary Martha, the other women who had brought candles also stepped up to the fireplace and lighted them; and, as if unable to live in their soft light, the uncanny spirit left the room.

Mary Martha and I continued to go every night, and on one occasion when we were listening to a discourse on "The exceeding

Mary Martha

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sinfulness of sin," tender little Mary Martha wept into her soft muslin pocket-handkerchief.

I, feeling sorry for her, leaned over and whispered into her ear, "You're not a sinner, Mary Martha ; don't cry."

"Oh, yes, I am, Peter Paul," she whispered back. "I am selfish. I only do what I like to do. I am living to please no one but myself."

The meetings were not many nights in progress before Mary Martha was among those who "went forward" among the sinners to the "penitent bench."

This filled me with a sort of rage. The idea of that dear Mary Martha calling herself a sinner ! I was really vexed at the Circuit Rider for the first time in my life for having talked her into believing she was one.

But I could see that he was greatly delighted. When she stepped out from her seat, walked up the aisle and knelt at the bench, he walked the platform back and forth, his face shining, while he sang with the others :

"There are angels hovering round,
To carry the tidings home,
To the New Jerusalem."

When Alec Macfarlane heard that Mary Martha had gone forward to the "mourner's bench" at a Methodist meeting he was filled with unspeakable rage. He immediately went to work to get up a series of dances as an offset to the Methodist meetings; and he had the assistance of 'Lizabeth Hannah (although she did not approve of his attentions to Mary Martha), for she strongly disapproved of Mary Martha becoming a Methodist.

Alec, when the invitations were out for the first dance, went at once and invited Mary Martha to accompany him to it. She refused, and Alec was more angry than ever.

Having no one else who seemed to sympathise with her, Mary Martha made a confidant of me.

"Peter Paul, you must help me pray for Alec Macfarlane, that he may be converted," she said with tears.

"Don't waste prayers on *him*," I said. "What do you care for Alec Macfarlane? The Circuit Rider is far away nicer."

"Oh, I *do* care, Peter Paul, better than you know," said Mary Martha, crying more bitterly, "and I *must* pray for him. The

Circuit Rider is a good man, and nice—but he is not Alec," she added with sobs.

I left her in disgust. The idea of anyone liking Alec Macfarlane better than the Circuit Rider! And I began to be burdened with the thought of how badly the poor Circuit Rider would feel when he learned about Mary Martha's preference. I could only gauge his feelings by what I imagined my own would be if I thought that Mary Martha liked anybody else better than she liked me.

In the days which followed, if I prayed at all about Alec Macfarlane, it was that he would *never* get converted; then perhaps in time Mary Martha would get over liking him.

I lived in constant dread that the Circuit Rider would find out that Mary Martha liked Alec better than she liked him; but he was to be saved from that disappointment in a way we knew not of.

Mary Martha and I continued to go every night to the protracted meetings, escorted to the door as usual by her father. One evening when the exercises were at their height (the congregation on their knees praying, every eye shut and head bowed with the exception

of mine) I saw shoot past the outside of one of the windows, which by this time were furnished with glass for lights, the wild, haggard face of Alec Macfarlane. He had evidently been trying to look into the school-room without being seen. How I trembled for fear he would come in and get converted. I was careful not to tell Mary Martha that I had seen him, but I could not refrain from telling her father.

"He, he!" chuckled Solomon, when he heard the story. "Alec's mad jealous o' that there Circuit Rider, an' he just come to see things for himself. I know how it is, Peter Paul; I was there onct myself," and he chuckled more heartily at the recollection of his own experiences than he did at those of Alec Macfarlane.

CHAPTER XVII

THE BRINGING IN OF ALEC MACFARLANE

THE schoolhouse where the Methodist meetings were held was about midway between our home and that of the Slaters', and it had been the custom for Solomon Slater and Mary Martha first to conduct me home, and then return to their own house.

One evening, shortly after Mary Martha's experience, when we came out of the meeting-place, Solomon, instead of turning toward my home, struck off in the direction of his own, Mary Martha and I dutifully following without asking any questions.

When we arrived at the Slater homestead we all entered, and found the hired boy seated in front of the fireplace keeping house alone, as 'Lizabeth Hannah was away at a dance.

Refilling his pipe with beech leaves, and procuring a fresh hickory torch, Solomon said, "Now, Peter Paul, I'm ready to take you,"

When we were safely outside the house, he whispered to me: "Let us run 'round, Peter Paul, an' take a peep in at the dance."

"The dance!" I cried.

"Whist!" he said in a sharp whisper, catching my arm, "don't let Mary Martha hear you; she's a Methody now, an' won't approve of dancin'. But my ears are just itchin' to hear once more the screechin' o' the fiddle. I'm rather stiff now with the rheumatics to shake my toe to it, but I can watch the rest o' them. The dance is at Highland Malcolm's, not far away; Alec persuaded his mother to let him have it there to-night."

I signified my entire willingness to accompany him. So, placing his pipe in the corner of his mouth, into a gap between his broken teeth, and grasping the torch in his right hand, he clasped my hand with his left, and we proceeded on our secret journey.

We struck off at an angle through the woods, which obviated the necessity of passing our house, and in due time reached the home of Highland Malcolm.

Coming up to the front of the house, we

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could see the company inside, as no pioneer ever thought of curtaining his windows, especially if there was anything festive going on inside.

"Let us stop here a minute an' watch 'em," said Solomon, striking his torch into a snow-bank, and taking a stand before a window, several feet back from it.

Inside the house they were having a merry time. The room had been cleared for the dancers, and at that moment Alec Macfarlane, attired in his father's kilts, was on the floor alone dancing the Highland fling, to the great interest and amusement of a throng which lined the walls and filled every available space without crowding too near the dancer. 'Lizabeth Hannah, with her arms a-kimbo, was standing prominently to the front, dressed in her plain linsey-woolsey. She apparently was enjoying the frivolity as well as any of them; it is probable that 'Lizabeth Hannah would have enjoyed anything at that time which she felt would be an offset to the Methodist revival.

"Look at him tryin' to make merry an' pertend he has a light heart, when I'll bet a

sexpence it's as heavy as lead," said Solomon in a heavy whisper, his eyes fixed on the gyrating Alec.

"Jigglin' 'round like that! That's the way 'tis wi' men; it's when they're the very dourest they put it on most to be gay; 'specially when it's about a lass. He, he!"

I did not know exactly what he meant, but I had become accustomed to men talking over my head, and did not take the trouble to inquire his meaning.

The Highland fling finished, Solomon and I slipped in among the throng, that immediately began to prepare for a *general* dance.

A table was shoved to the wall, and two chairs were placed upon it. Then Jacob Cloud, at this time called "Limpin' Jake," with some assistance mounted the table, fiddle in hand, and took a seat in one of the chairs. Barney McGee's father, who was deputised to "call off," was soon occupying the other chair, and the fiddle, much to Solomon's delight, began its weird, wild "screechins."

The young people, with the ease born of much practice, formed themselves into squares,

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and amid the shuffling of many feet, and the twang of the violin, the voice of Barney McGee's father could be heard singing :

" Pass right through, and balance to,
And swing with the girl behind you."

The moments fled on wings. Solomon and I thought we had left the dance quite early, but we heard the rooster crowing shortly after we started, and when I reached home I had to confess to my mother, whom I found sitting up waiting for me, all about going to the dance, and what I saw there.

All my mother said (and like everybody else she seemed to be talking more to herself than to me), " Poor Alec ! he's trying hard to show a brave front ! "

April came in that month like a flood, the small streams became rivers, and the larger ones rushing, mighty torrents. Beautiful she was, with sky of softest blue, delicate swelling buds, and the sweet songs of returning birds. But, oh, oh, how little we imagined what a great sorrow was coming to us before the spring month took her departure !

It was in the second week of the month that I met Joe Town on the highway. He was in great glee, and cried: "I've got a good one on yer Methodist parson now, Pete; I've sold him the greatest cuss of a horse as ever wore saddle!"

Joe slapped his thigh and laughed immoderately. "I tell ye Alec Macfarlane was the pleased coon when I told him; he has no love fer the parson, no more'n meself," he added

"The preacher wanted to know whether the horse was a *good swimmer*," he went on, "an' I says, 'None better.' Ha, ha! But I did not tell him that the brute always throws his rider the minute he gets into deep water. He swims alone, he does. Ha, ha, ha! Yer parson will get baptised the first river he comes to."

"How dare you, Joe Town!" I blazed, stamping my foot, but he laughed all the louder. I knew that there were so many unbridged rivers and streams to cross through the country that one of the first questions asked about a horse was, "Is he a good swimmer?" and I felt very angry when I

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thought about the Circuit Rider being cheated.

It was an hour after I had this talk with Joe that a messenger came running to our home crying :

“ The Circuit Rider has gone down in the Chippewa Creek! The Circuit Rider has gone down in the Chippewa Creek! His horse threw him into the water—and he did not rise again ! ”

The Englishman chanced to be at our place, and he and father rushed at once to the river where the catastrophe had happened, mother and I following.

The dripping horse was standing shaking himself on the bank, but there was no sign of his rider—not even a ripple on the surface of the water to indicate where he had disappeared.

Grappling irons were procured, and the men of the locality in turns dragged the bottom of the impenetrable river. Night came, foggy and damp, and great brushwood fires had to be built on the banks of the creek to enable the searchers to continue their work. The entire neighbourhood had gathered,

and were gazing in strained silence into the dark waters ; when, after a search of three hours, the Englishman lifted the limp, dripping body from the grasp of the cruel waters, carried it ashore in his boat, and straightened the limbs out in the light of the fire on the bank.

Those strong arms that had once sheltered me now lying nerveless ! It was too much ! With a low cry of anguish I rushed to throw myself on the cold body, but mother snatched me and held me to her bosom. Mary Martha flew to 'Lizabeth Hannah's side and cried aloud into her shoulder. There were cries and moaning sobs on every hand, and the Englishman, with the light of the fire full in his face, took off his hat, and said in a clear voice, loud enough to be heard by all :

“ Our dear friend has but joined the great throng going up every day, and hour, and minute into the presence of their God.”

This seemed to raise our minds from earth, and lifted for a short time the pall of misery.

“ My ! ” whispered 'Lizabeth Hannah, “ he talks as good as if he was a parson.”

The body of the Circuit Rider was carried

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reverently to the Englishman's house, he would have it so, and he and my father sat up all night fashioning the pine coffin, Highland Malcolm, Neil Campbell, and others holding lanterns to furnish light for the work.

And much I wondered why Neil Campbell, who seemed to hate the Circuit Rider when he was alive, was so anxious to serve him after he was dead.

The Presbyterian minister, the only one besides the Methodist who visited the locality, was hundreds of miles away at the time of the accident, so it devolved on the Englishman, on the day of the funeral, to stand at the head of the new-made grave, while the weeping people encircled it, and read from the Methodist Book of Service: "Earth to earth; dust to dust; ashes to ashes."

After the funeral the strong men held council, withdrew to the woods, and cutting down some great cedars, they split them into rails, and reverently, as if they had been enclosing a marble mausoleum, they erected around the sodded grave a rail fence, to distinguish it from other graves, which were constantly growing in number.

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"We'll cover it with violets in the spring," whispered Mary Martha, the first time she and I went to visit the grave. "He was fond of flowers."

Nothing, however, could console me. I spent much time alone, questioning of my own turbulent heart, "Where was the Angel that 'encampeth around about' when the Circuit Rider went down in the Chippewa River?"

I was in one of my worst moods on a certain day, up in my attic room, with my face buried in the pillows of my small bed weeping bitterly, when Isabel came with her father to the neighbourhood. Mother heard of her arrival and sent inviting her to come at once to the house. This she did, and climbing up the ladder-like steps which led to the loft, she tiptoed across the bare floor, and stooping down over my reclining figure, she whispered into my ear:

"Heaven's a nice place, Peter Paul."

It seemed like a message from the angels; I sat up and dried my tears. And from that day I seemed to forget the poignancy of my grief in the thought of the Circuit Rider in that "nice place."

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The protracted meetings in the schoolhouse continued with increased zeal and earnestness, another Methodist preacher coming to take charge of the services.

One night the singing and praying congregation were almost struck dumb by the entrance of Alec Macfarlane, with his heavy medal gleaming on his breast, and the brace of pistols and bowie-knife around his waist. He dropped into a back seat.

He was not there ten minutes when he rose to his feet, walked the length of the schoolhouse, and fell on his knees at the penitent bench.

In a few moments he straightened up, took off his pistols, bowie-knife, and medal, and handed them to the preacher.

There was a moment's solemn hush all through the room, then a woman's voice cried, "Nothing but the death of our dear brother could work toward the bringin' in of Alec Macfarlane!" A large company of Methodists who had gathered from over a wide area were present, and from various parts of the room came ejaculatory prayers and cries for the penitent. "The candle of

the Lord be lighted for the wayfaring man ! ”
“ Anoint his eyes with eye-salve that he may see ! ” “ Give him songs in the night ; the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness ! ” “ Turn his mourning into dancing ! ” “ Put off his sackcloth and gird him with gladness ! ”

But the subject of all these demonstrations heard none of them ; such was the nervous strain under which he was suffering, he fell unconscious where he knelt, and a sharp whisper went all over the school-house :

“ Alec Macfarlane has gone under the Power ! ”

He opened his eyes in about half an hour, looked about him in bewilderment, and asked where he was, and when told he replied :

“ I worked with the Devil until I rejoiced in laying schemes to annoy the good man who has passed away. It is too late to ask his pardon, so I've come to ask God's.”

Instantly an old, thin, quavering voice at the back of the schoolroom broke into song, and very soon all the congregation were singing :

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" 'Tis the old-time religion,
'Tis the old-time religion,
'Tis the old-time religion,
And it's good enough for me.

" It was good for Paul and Silas,
It was good for Paul and Silas,
It was good for Paul and Silas,
And it's good enough for me.

" It will take us all to heaven,
It will take us all to heaven,
It will take us all to heaven,
And it's good enough for me."

A week after that the intelligence flew all around the settlement that Alec Macfarlane had decided to prepare himself for the work of a "circuit rider."

"And won't Mary Martha make the dearest little circuit rider's wife?" said my mother when the intelligence reached her. "Life could never be prosaic if she were around."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE GOING AWAY OF JOE TOWN

As soon as he could reach us a younger brother of the Circuit Rider came to fill his place. The vessel in which he had crossed the ocean landed just a week after the sad accident. He was fresh and fair, this new young man, no seams or scars of battle adorned his face.

"Those roses in his cheeks," said my mother, "have grown in the moist climate of England."

"You're not the Circuit Rider," I said with some asperity after I had carefully looked him over; and then my voice choked, and my eyes filled with tears.

He looked at me kindly and reflectively, as if he understood me, then he said, "Call me Brother John."

He was in the community but a very short time when I made it my business to tell him the whole story about Joe Town

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selling his brother the fractious horse. I went into details, and did not spare Joe ; finishing my tale, I said :

“ Don't waste any time, Brother John, praying for *him* ; he's not *fit* to be prayed for ! ”

He looked sympathetically at me, and said, “ You loved my brother ? ” And something like a tear shone in the corner of his clear blue eye. Then he looked away, away into the depths of the soft blue of the evening sky, and I heard him saying very softly to himself, “ Pray for them which despitefully use you.”

I left him in a rage. What was the use of my trying to bring down vengeance on Joe if this new preacher was going to *pray* for him ?

I seemed from the date of his dastardly trick to lose all fear of Joe, and I determined to dog his footsteps and, if possible, find him out in some of his villainous deeds, and expose him.

I had in my days of confidence told him that the Englishman received money from England at certain periods, and I had noticed that he had become greatly interested in the information.

"He does, Pete?" he inquired eagerly.
"Are you sure? When does he get it?"

This all came back to me after I had my eyes opened to his real character.

One day the Englishman went to Niagara, and was gone all day. Joe remarked on his absence, and asked me whether he were coming home that night. He also inquired whether he expected to get his English mail.

Even while he was talking the Englishman walked into the yard—it was then near dusk—with a parcel of mail, letters and papers, in his hand.

I was watching Joe, and saw a peculiar glint in his eye, and that instant I made up my mind to keep an eye on him through the night that was just approaching.

There was only one path through the woods to the Englishman's house, and that ran past our place; to reach it in any other way was wellnigh impossible at that time of year. This may be very hard to understand, and, indeed, cannot be understood by one who never had the privilege of seeing in the dense forest our acres of flooded swampland, and great bogs, where a man might sink over

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his head. If it had been any other season, Joe could have found more than one road to the place he wished to reach.

At the time I usually went to bed I perched myself at my window upstairs to watch that road, and I was rewarded about midnight, after father and mother and Sal were long in the land of dreams, by seeing Joe's figure creeping stealthily past.

"Hello, Joe!" I cried, so as to be heard by him and still not loud enough to wake the sleepers in the house, "Out for a walk? Wait a minute, and I'll go along too."

I heard Joe cursing under his breath, but he said aloud, "Don't be a fool, Pete. Whoever went for a walk at twelve o'clock at night? Get to bed with you! I'm out"—he hesitated—"to see—whether any o' my chickens air roostin' in the trees—the hawks would ketch 'em. Get to bed!" he ordered again.

"I am not a bit sleepy," I replied; and I continued to sit at the window, and the moon being very bright, Joe could see me quite distinctly.

He walked back toward his own house

very reluctantly, muttering as he went. When he was some distance away he shouted back angrily, in a sort of muffled disguised tone of voice, "If ever they was a young fool, you're one, Pete!"

I knew Joe would try to travel that road again, and I determined to watch him at all hazards, so I sat firmly at my post. When I began to fear I might fall asleep, I found some red pepper pods which mother had drying in the attic, and pinching off a bit, I touched my eyes with it. This had the desired effect of thoroughly awakening me. I knew I was a very determined youngster—what mother and the schoolmaster sometimes called "dogged," for I had made up my mind to sit at that window the entire night.

As I had expected, in about an hour Joe came stepping noiselessly along again.

When he got right opposite my window I darted out my head, and again called, in that careful whispering shout, "Hello, Joe! out for more chickens? Let me go out and help you. I'd like nothing better. I'm a bad sleeper to-night."

Swearing audibly this time, Joe turned

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and retraced his steps without deigning to answer me.

Somehow I had a premonition that he would come again, and I still stuck to my post. I had prepared for the night's vigil by putting three or four of Sal's generous-sized scones under my pillow, and between the refreshment they furnished, and the stimulant of the red peppers, and my own doggedness, I stayed awake.

It was just the hour before dawn, the hour when sleepers are said to be the most sleepy, that Joe came creeping back again. He was sure that I would be asleep at that hour.

"Hello, Joe!" I cried in surprise, as if this were the first time I had caught him in night wanderings. "I am going with you, for I know you are going to see the Englishman." And I proceeded to climb out through the window on to the slanting roof of the cookhouse.

Swearing broad fierce oaths, in a low tone for fear of waking father, Joe ordered me to get inside the window. I hesitated and he swore louder, and began to throw pebbles at me. Then father, hearing the noise, shouted,

"What's the matter, Peter Paul?" Joe turned and walked double-quick towards home.

Father, being awakened, rose and began to walk around the house, lighting one of the candles, and I, knowing that I had frustrated Joe's designs for that night, lay down on my bed and fell into a deep sleep.

The next day I told all about my night's experience to the Englishman. He looked thoughtful, and inviting father to accompany him, he rode off to Niagara and deposited his money in a safe place there.

In the early part of the following winter, Highland Malcolm drove a large load of pork to a distant market, and expected to bring back in its stead a good purse of money. I was present, as also was Joe, when a number of men standing in a group on the highway were talking over Highland Malcolm's prospects. I immediately saw the old glint of fire which meant designs shoot through Joe's eyes. He said nothing, but I had caught that expression, and, as Highland Malcolm was expected home that night, I determined to watch Joe's movements.

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It grew dusk, and Highland Malcolm had not returned, so I watched and waited.

After the stars could be seen quite distinctly in the sky, I, on the watch, saw Joe leave his home and strike off through the woods, along the road which Highland Malcolm must travel when on his return journey. I had grown brave; the British soldier was surely beginning to show in my make-up. There had been a slight fall of snow, and procuring, secretly, father's moccasins, so that my tracks might appear to be those of a grown man when discovered, I stole out after Joe.

On, on he tramped, over the white snow, between the ghostly-looking trees and the ghoulish stumps, I stealthily following, just keeping him in sight, walking off the road in among the trees which bordered it, and occasionally, when Joe's head looked as if it might suddenly turn, dodging behind one of them.

After awhile we heard the weird strains of Highland Malcolm's bagpipes; his oxen were faithfully keeping the homeward path, and he was enlivening the way by playing on his pipes.

The instant Joe heard him he drew a

mask from his pocket and adjusted it to his face. I saw that at the first sound of the pipes he had stopped to feel in his pocket, and I instantly doubled my speed to see for what reason he did it. After he had adjusted the dark mask, he drew out a pistol from another pocket, and as soon as Highland Malcolm's oxen came jogging leisurely along, Joe jumped out into the road, caught the oxen by the head, and having stopped them, he strode to the amazed Highlander, and presenting his pistol at his head, he cried in a hoarse, disguised voice :

“ Your money or your life, stranger ! ”

Poor Highland Malcolm ! He was entirely unarmed, trusting to his pipes to keep off the wolves, and he could do nothing but hand over the entire price of his load of pork.

But I, Peter Paul Thornton, was there, hidden behind a big basswood, and saw it all, and I danced for glee thinking how I would bring Joe to well-deserved punishment. “ Now I'll pay him back for drowning the Circuit Rider ! ” I cried with fierce joy in my heart, claspng my hands over my mouth for fear I would make my joy audible.

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Joe stood still on the road and watched Highland Malcolm drive away, and when he saw that he was out of sight, he began to retrace his steps, stepping precisely in the footmarks he had formerly made in the snow, so as to obliterate them. In some places he tracked two or three times back and forth over the footsteps, and I fancy the greatest expert among detectives would have been unable to decide that they were the footprints of one man.

As soon as Joe had again reached his home, I angled in and out among the trees, until I reached my home; then I climbed the cook-house roof, and reached my own window.

The story of the robbery spread like wild-fire through the neighbourhood; every man and woman who met another man or woman during the first day following the event saluted with the question: "Have you heard of the robbery?—Highland Malcolm waylaid on the road by a masked man—a stranger around these parts; he didn't know Malcolm's name, etc. A pistol pointed at his head, etc., etc."

Every householder began melting lead

and pouring it into moulds, to make bullets, men were known to come in with ashen faces and all in a tremble from meeting at night a wandering cow in the woods, which they had mistaken for the highwayman.

All the while I was walking around fairly swelling with importance, waiting an auspicious moment to divulge my secret. I had decided to visit the Englishman that evening and tell him the whole story, getting his advice as to what step to take next, when, greatly to my chagrin and disappointment, two constables came from Niagara and arrested Joe on the charge of stealing an ox from a farmer near that town.

The ox had been stolen, and as a fresh hide and a pair of horns had been found on Joe's premises, he was arrested and taken off to prison; while Highland Malcolm's money, which was found on his person, was returned to the owner.

His trial in time followed, and the case that was made out against him seemed to satisfy the jury of his guilt. At that time capital punishment was the legal penalty for

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stealing live stock, and Joe was sentenced to be hanged.

I spent a sleepless night the first after hearing of Joe's sentence, part of the time crying with horror at the thought of Joe's awful fate, and part of the time declaring that he richly deserved it for drowning the poor Circuit Rider.

When the Circuit Rider's brother heard of the sentence, he was shocked, as also was the Englishman. "Hanging for such an offence! Why, it is little better than murder," said the latter.

"His sentence will certainly be commuted," they both said. "It is too ridiculous to think of hanging a man for such a slight offence." And they made no effort to interfere with the actions of those in authority.

It was early summer when the day appointed for the execution arrived. Preparations were being made to carry out the sentence, when the Englishman and Brother John awoke to the knowledge that nothing was likely to be done to save the condemned man from the sentence hanging over his head. The two held a hasty consultation;

then the Englishman hurried away home, saddled his horse, and galloped off on some mysterious quest, the purport of which was known to no one but Brother John.

The gibbet had been erected in a public place on the morning of that day, and a great crowd, some coming many miles, had assembled to witness the execution.

At the appointed hour a cart was driven under the gibbet, in which cart was seated the unfortunate Joe Town.

At this moment Brother John stepped up to the sheriff and requested the privilege of offering prayer for the unfortunate culprit. The sheriff at once granted the request, and Brother John mounted the cart and kneeled down on the bottom of it beside the condemned man.

It was a hot day, and there was no shelter for anyone from the fierce rays of the sun, but Brother John, baring his head, began his prayer.

For the first fifteen minutes the sheriff and sweltering crowd listened to the prayer with respectful silence and patience. Then a little uneasiness began to manifest itself

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among the throng of sightseers. But Brother John prayed on.

The sheriff moved about to call the preacher's attention to the fact that time was passing, and the perspiring crowd began to sway and murmur. A sort of awe, however, seemed to enthral both sheriff and people. Prayer was not to be rudely interrupted, even on such a pressing occasion, and Brother John prayed on.

An hour passed. Brother John's voice had grown husky, his throat was dry and parched, his tongue had grown thick, his lips cracked, but still he continued to pray.

Even Joe himself began to show some impatience, as if he wished the preacher to cease. Still Brother John went on, uttering words of no significance, and almost inarticulate.

The crowd became noisy, and the sheriff, feeling that duty must take the place of reverence, was about to take the preacher by the shoulder and compel him to cease, when there was a great shout heard on the outskirts of the throng, and the crowd made way, while the Englishman, jumping from his

reeking horse, pushed his way through the people waving over his head a paper.

The paper was a reprieve signed by the Governor.

At sight of the Englishman holding the paper Brother John fell insensible on the bottom of the cart, and everyone feared for some time that he would never recover from the great physical and nervous strain to which his prayer against time had subjected him.

The arrival of the Englishman with the reprieve was the first intimation the sheriff and people had that the preacher had any ulterior motive in his hour-and-a-half prayer, and the solicitude for the recovery of the fainting man was universal. It was whispered among the people that the Englishman and the preacher had arranged between them that while the former rode post-haste to the residence of the Governor to ask for a reprieve, the latter, as the spiritual adviser of the condemned man, was to delay the hanging until the Englishman's return by exercising his privilege of prayer, and the air was rent with cheers.

Brother John recovered from his swoon

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in a short time, and Joe Town was taken back to gaol.

The reprieve led to further investigation into the case, and the result was that Joe was pardoned on condition that he left the country.

"Well," said Neil Campbell at the conclusion of the case, "it's on'y what we might expect; the fellow has some Injun in him."

"Tut, man!" said Highland Malcolm. "He has some Old Adam in him, like the rest of us, an' when *He* gets the upper hand he'll act the same whether he's in a white man or Injun."

The problem that *I* was trying to solve was of another sort, and I asked myself many times a day, "How could Brother John risk his life praying for a man who had been the cause of his own brother's death?"

In my bewilderment, in time, I carried the problem to the Englishman. He heard my story through; then he said softly, as if half soliloquising and half answering me:

"It is the God-passion; he would follow Him who walked Calvary and Olivet."

CHAPTER XIX

THE ENGLISHMAN'S STORY

NOT long after Joe Town had left the country the Englishman announced his intention of visiting the North-West Territory.

"I may be gone two or three years," he said. "I want to go thoroughly over the ground, visit all the principal places and posts of the great fur companies, and become acquainted with the people."

"When do you expect to start?" said my father.

"Very soon," he answered. "Indeed, I have been thinking of this journey for some time, and am about ready to start any day now. I shall go by canoe until I get into the unknown country; there East Wind is to meet me, and be my guide for the remainder of the journey. You know he has travelled all over that locality, and knows it perfectly. I have arranged with him to conduct me through the land of the foot-hills."

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He started a week after this conversation, one morning early, all our family standing in the doorway waving him farewell. He had locked up his house and come over to give mother the key.

While he was gone nothing very eventful happened on the peninsula ; but we missed him greatly, and kept our eyes turned westward watching for his return.

The hawthorn trees were in blossom, and the wrens were secreting their nests of twigs in hidden corners, when the Englishman returned to the peninsula, after a two years' absence. He came unannounced, but he found his home in order ; for Sal, under the direction of mother, had taken great pride in keeping it swept and garnished, ready for his appearance at any time.

Father was away at a distant market to dispose of some of his produce the day the Englishman returned ; but the latter accepted mother's urgent invitation to spend the evening in our house and tell us about his travels.

We were seated in front of the pine-knot fire, for the evenings were yet quite cool,

when he said, "Well, Peter Paul, where do you want me to begin?"

"Begin right when you left our door," said I.

"Well," said he, "I walked off from your presence early in the morning, gun in hand, as you remember, and knapsack over my shoulder. As soon as I reached water navigable by a canoe, I bought one and continued my journey in that fashion.

"When night befell me, I drew into shore, built a great fire, and, undoing my blanket, I laid me down for the night, my gun within reach, and was lulled to sleep by the sough of the wind in the tree-tops.

"In time I came to a locality unknown to me, where, as previously arranged, I met East Wind. This man was born and brought up in the great North-West, and was pleased to have the privilege of acting as my guide.

"Travelling by canoe, and portaging where canoeing was impossible, we penetrated far into the country. When canoeing was not practicable, and our route lay overland we bought a horse. I found on trying to ride the animal that, contrary to the

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assertions of the trader, he had not been broken.

“ ‘ Me break him,’ said East Wind reassuringly, in response to my lamentations for being so credulous of the horse-dealer's word. ‘ When we come to lake me break him.’

“ Accordingly, when we came to a large body of water, the Indian stripped off his clothing and swam out into the water with the pony. When he had him some distance from the shore, he jumped on his back. The horse plunged and tossed for awhile, but soon settled down to plain swimming. After two or three experiences of this treatment, I could mount and ride the pony on land.

“ Another horse was bought, and similarly trained by East Wind for his own use.

“ We rode all day, carrying our provisions, blankets, and kettle ; skirting the great herds of buffalo which dotted the country in incredible numbers ; surprising the flocks of swift, graceful antelopes ; hearing the barks and snarls of hordes of wolves ; swimming and fording bridgeless and ferryless streams, of more or less depth and rapidity.”

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"Dear, dear," said mother, "it is a wonder you were spared to come back to us."

"At night we camped," continued the Englishman. "East Wind was not only an old scout and hunter, but something of a poet and artist as well, for when night was approaching he invariably selected for a camping-place a spot combining beauty and utility. Beside a silvery stream, or mirror-like lake, beautiful with grasses, reeds, and flowers, we tied our horses and lay down with the blue canopy of heaven for a roof, and the horizon for walls of our dormitory."

I hitched my chair a foot nearer to him for fear I might miss a word of the interesting story.

"Thus we journeyed hundreds of miles," he continued, "following the beaten path of the buffalo trails, as East Wind knew well the instinctive knowledge of those great creatures in choosing the best route through the country, and that by following their track one invariably reached the best crossings for the rivers.

"We came to a very swift stream, where great trees and rafts of driftwood were being

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swept down by the strong current. On the bank of this river a pole was stuck in the ground, and on top of the pole was a note. Taking down the pole, we read :

“ ‘Down in the woods, in the direction this pole points, there is a skin canoe.’

“ This note had been put there by some of the Hudson Bay Company for the accommodation of their employees. East Wind, following the written directions, found the skin canoe, and we crossed the river in safety, allowing our horses to swim across.

“ The Hudson Bay Company's posts are the chief places of interest,” continued the narrator, after he had paused to place a small pine knot on the fire, “ in that great country, distinguished by immense stretches of plain, great forests, mighty rivers, and innumerable smaller streams, along with lakes of all sizes, foot-hills, and grand ranges of mountains. As yet there is no settlement. The natives of the country are nomadic ; hunting, trapping, fishing are their means of obtaining a livelihood. To reap the benefits of those industries the Hudson Bay Company has established various trading posts

over a vast area. The one object the Company had in view when establishing the posts was collecting and shipping the furs of the country; but incidentally the posts served as a meeting-place for all classes of people to be found in the great North Land; and so they came to be regarded as a sort of rendezvous where one might meet a long-lost friend.

"East Wind, knowing well the dangers of the country, took many a circuitous route to avoid going into the districts of the ferocious Blackfoot Indians."

"Oh!" I interposed, "East Wind has told me the Blackfoot Indian's story of the Creation."

"At one time," continued the Englishman, "we watched in secret a grave being dug in the woods. First the dried leaves were gathered and placed in a buffalo hide. Then a shallow grave was dug, the body placed within, and the earth put back and levelled with the surface of the surrounding ground. Then the leaves were scattered over the grave to make it look as if the earth had not been disturbed. The unused earth was carried away and scattered so as not to be seen.

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“ ‘ All dis am done,’ explained East Wind, ‘ so dat no enemee find out where grave am and do work of vengeance on de dead man.’

“ East Wind, although continually on the look-out for enemies, was surprised one afternoon when we were riding through a narrow defile by a troop of Indian cavalry who rushed in upon us with whoops and yells, from behind a bluff.”

Mother shivered, and I drew some inches nearer the story-teller.

“ I’ll admit I was greatly startled,” said the Englishman, “ until I noticed that East Wind was recognising friends.”

“ ‘ These am mountain Injuns, an’ my frien’s,’ said East Wind placidly.

“ The Indians of the company and their horses were both very fine looking ; and the costumes of the former were varied and picturesque in the extreme, some consisting of little else than breech-cloth and a small looking-glass (the latter prized article procured from the Hudson Bay Company in trade for furs) depending by a long brass chain around their necks. Others wore perforated

skin shirts and leggings. Most of the Indians were adorned with brass pendants attached to ears and hair, and brass collars and bracelets. Their faces and bodies, where exposed, were much decorated with paint—red, blue, and yellow being the chosen colours. Some of the warriors wore scalp-locks dangling from arms and legs, which gave them a very gruesome appearance.”

“Oh! Oh!” ejaculated mother, laying her knitting, which she had been endeavouring to work at, in her lap.

“The Indian horsemen seemed very much interested in me,” continued the story-teller, “and I scarcely appreciated the interest, I must admit. They asked East Wind many questions about me, and insisted on our going into their camp to be presented to their chief, Maskepetoon.

“I gave a reluctant consent to this. We joined the party, and, riding over a ridge to the left, a large Indian encampment appeared before us. Rings of white tents made of buffalo skins, all of one shape, formed a little circular village. On some of the tents were painted hieroglyphics which proclaimed—to

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those who could read them—the achievements of their owners.

“The chief was a tall, fine-looking man to whom I was introduced by East Wind. Maskepetoon received me graciously.

“In the centre of the circle of the tents were some larger tents, one of which the chief apportioned to me, his white visitor, and bade me occupy as long as I remained in the camp.

“For miles around this village of tents hundreds of horses belonging to the campers were feeding, and such was the character of the surrounding tribes that on every knoll guards were stationed to watch that no enemies molested either the camp or the horses.

“The Indians' dogs, in hundreds, half wolf creatures, also surrounded the circle of tents.

“A feast was spread on the ground, and, seated on buffalo skins, we ate a bountiful repast consisting of two dishes, boiled buffalo tongue and roast ribs.”

“No bread or vegetables to eat with them?” interrogated mother.

"Not even any salt," returned the Englishman.

"Maskepetoon's hospitality was kingly in its kindness," he continued. "I certainly received a new insight into the Indian character. The noble red man is no myth. I saw him personified, standing before me clothed in flesh and blood in the person of Maskepetoon the Indian chief.

"I cannot do better," he continued, "in describing him, than give you the words of a teacher who is working among the Indians of the great West :

" ' Here and there a cotter's babe is royal born,
By right divine.' "

" ' An Indian babe was "royal born by right divine" when the child who became the man Maskepetoon was born, his birth-right the common heritage of natural man, his birthplace the Rocky Mountains, his cradle lullaby the crash of tumbling avalanches and the roaring of mighty chinooks. The shrill cry of the mountain lion, the deep bass note of the buffalo, the riplings of the limpid streams, and the raging of the mountain tor-

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rents in their wild race to a common level—these, with the pagan's death wail, the rattle of the conjurer's drum, and the warrior's shout of triumph, were sounds familiar to his baby ears.

“ ‘His childhood was passed in travelings constant and perilous. Winter or summer his people had no abiding-place. He was always in the presence of the giant forces of Mother Nature. His youthful eye could ever and anon look out from some foot-hill height upon scenes which the varying shades of heaven's light so glorified that these became as pictures painted by the hand of God Himself. His young manhood was passed in the times when the rich premiums of life, love, respect, gratitude, were lavishly bestowed upon the expert horseman, the successful hunter, and the brave and victorious warrior.

“ ‘Maskepetoon had a free hand in all this, and brought to himself and people great glory. As was the manner of the period, he was a polygamist, and an inveterate hater of his tribal enemies. This he had drunk in with his mother's milk, and yet as he grew to strong manhood I can readily believe this

unique man had his moments of longings for better things. The Divine would stir within him so strongly at times that the crusting of centuries of sin and darkness would crack, and the man would aspire and look up, and long for something that he instinctively knew would be infinitely better than his present.'

"There came a time," continued the Englishman, "when Maskepetoon stopped warring, and became an advocate of peace, and that many years before the message of 'Peace on earth and goodwill to men' was carried to that lone land."

"And I have heard it said," interposed mother, "that a human voice alone can carry that message, or it will never be carried."

"It was soon after Maskepetoon had taken this stand that a sore trial befell him. An Indian of the cruel Blackfoot tribe murdered his old father, and afterwards that Indian came into his very camp, and completely into his power. When Maskepetoon heard about his presence in his camp he sent for him. The man, an elderly warrior of the Blackfoot, came expecting his death; but as soon as he entered the tent Maskepetoon

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waved him to a seat by his side. Then he passed him some of his own clothes, made of leather and adorned with beads, quills, and human hair, saying, 'Put these on.' The frightened murderer thought the chief was but dressing him for his death, and awaited the awful moment. But Maskepetoon spoke :

" ' You deprived me of my father, and there was a time when I would have gloried in taking your life and drinking your blood, but that is past. What makes you pale? You need not fear, I will not kill you. You must now be to me a father. Wear my clothes, ride my horse, and tell your people when you go back to your camp this is the way Maskepetoon takes revenge.'

" The old Blackfoot warrior replied :

" ' You have killed me, my son. You are a great man. Never in the history of my people has such as this that you have done been known. My people, and all people, shall hear of this and say, " The young chief is brave and strong and good ; he stands alone.' "

" Oh, Mrs. Thornton," went on the Englishman, " where among the nations of

the world could one find anything grander in character than exists among the North American Indians? ”

When the Englishman had thus spoken, Sal, who was seated at the back of the room stitching a moccasin by the light of a candle, turned her head and gave him one quick, appreciative glance, then resumed her sewing.

Mother had laid her knitting on the table during the recital of Maskepetoon's story, and with interlaced fingers was gazing intently into the face of the story-teller.

“ Nothing, *nothing* grander,” she whispered. “ Oh, the mystery of some great, sweet influence reaching that man out there on the lone prairie, without any human intervention ! ”

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CHAPTER XX

THE STORY CONTINUED

"AFTER I had eaten at Maskepetoon's table all the buffalo tongue and roast ribs I could relish," continued the Englishman, after a short silence, "I was urgently invited out to witness one way the Red Man had of providing himself with food, and, indeed, with tents and clothing.

"This was done by entrapping the buffalo in a corral or 'pound,' where a much larger number of them could be killed with less labour than by chasing them over the prairie with bow and arrows.

"This pound Maskepetoon's people had built by clearing away the timber from a circular space of about one hundred and fifty feet in diameter. Within this circle one lone tree was left standing in the centre. A strong, high fence of logs and brush had been built around this circle, an entrance of about twenty feet being left open. When all

the fence was built, the conjurers among the tribe hung little bags on the lone centre tree, which were supposed to have magnetic virtue, or give luck to the pound.

“ In the presence of the visitor, a man went out on horseback to start the herd of buffalo, which were reported to be only five miles away, toward the enclosure. With much fast riding, and great effort, he headed the wild cattle toward the place of their captivity. He had frightened them until they had ‘bunched,’ then he uttered strange, weird cries which mystified them, and on and on swept the thoroughly affrighted, bewildered herd in the very direction in which the hunter wished them to go. As they approached the pound they were hedged in at each side by watchers, stationed behind trees, who kept them to their course, and, with one mad, final rush, they entered the place of their doom.

As soon as they were all in, and galloping wildly around the circle, the arrows of the Indians stationed on the wall began to whiz, and the firing was continued until all the animals in the enclosure were slain.

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"As soon as I had seen the buffalo portioned out among the tribe, and had received a generous present of some hams to carry on my journey, I bade Maskepetoon farewell, with a great feeling of reverence in my heart, and East Wind and I resumed our journey.

"We came in time to the treeless region where nothing larger than a rose-bush was to be seen, and grass reached away into interminable spaces.

"After much travelling I awoke one morning to look upon the great Rocky Mountains. There had been a mist the night before when we encamped, so that the view was obscured, but in the morning the sun was touching the great peaks and setting them ablaze. Snow-clad they stood in their purity against the deep blue of the sky. Infinitely beyond what I had imagined was this glorious sight, although I had read concerning them.

"I now determined to go back over the prairie, visiting whatever posts we had missed in crossing to the Rocky Mountains. The wild country was beginning to show signs of autumn as we proceeded from one post to

another, and the herds of the wilderness were fattening for the cold weather.

“ Although we could see in the distance thousands of the wild cattle, we were not allowed to approach very near them; the wary animals had learned that man was a formidable enemy. But the meat we brought with us was nearly exhausted—and there was really nothing else but meat to live on in that uncultivated country—and East Wind proposed that he should shoot a buffalo.

“ ‘ You better stay here,’ he said to me, ‘ an’ me go near an’ shoot him.’ ”

“ He carefully studied the ‘ lay ’ of the land, as we were about five miles from the buffaloes. Then he began to get into closer quarters, riding behind hills and along valleys and ravines. Leaving his horse at a certain place, he began to crawl at full length on the ground, when it was impossible to go otherwise without being seen by the wary herd. It was slow work coming within shooting distance of the nearest buffalo; but centuries of heredity and much practice had made the Indian a scouter. When he had crept into the vicinity of the great animals,

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he fastened his white blanket over his head, letting it fall down over his body, continuing to crawl stealthily nearer, and still nearer. All this was done in the teeth of the wind, so that the scent of the hunter should not be carried to the game.

"I was watching this matchless scouting with very great interest," continued the Englishman, pausing an instant to throw another pine knot on the fire. "I would at times lose sight of the Indian, only to see him reappear in an unexpected quarter, but always nearer the game.

"It was growing dark when East Wind succeeded in getting right in among the herd, and was lost to my sight.

"Presently there was a great commotion; the buffaloes bunched, then the great herd thundered out of sight. But while they ran a shot had been fired, and East Wind had his fresh meat.

"I learned," said the story-teller, smiling, "to enjoy broiled owl, roasted elk-horns, and the marrow of shank-bones, all of which delicacies East Wind knew how to cook as well as to procure.

"We continued our journey over the plain, from one palisaded post to another, until the winter set in and the snow shrouded everything. Then we provided ourselves with a sled and a train of dogs, procured from the squaws skin suits, and proceeded on our journey toward another post.

"During that first day's journey snow fell heavily. Our progress was slow, and night found us far from human habitation. But East Wind was equal to the emergency, and when darkness compelled us to stop, he proceeded at once to prepare a camping place.

"He had selected a spot among some trees on a bluff, and his first act was to clear away the snow from about twelve feet square down to the ground, leaving the deep snow at the sides for walls."

"We have walls like that sometimes outlining our paths out to the barn and stable in winter time," said mother, "when there has been a heavy fall of snow. I suppose it falls even more heavily in the North-West."

"He next lined the walls with pine boughs," continued the Englishman, "which

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he had instructed me how to cut while he was digging the snow, and carpeted the bottom of the enclosure with the same. He stuck poles in the snow-banks over which to stretch blankets for a roof, but as it had ceased snowing, he thought the roof would not be necessary.

"When the camping place was completed, the two of us gathered a great quantity of wood and piled it within the enclosure. Up shot the ruddy flames when the fire was touched to the light wood; and the pale, cold, silent place became like enchanted ground. The magical fire had painted the snow pink, and set it with jewels. The jewel-besprinkled trees seemed to assume a femininity, and become like great protecting mothers around us. The very smoke fell under the enchanter's spell, and seemed like incense rising in spiral columns to heaven.

"East Wind then proceeded to cook supper and feed the dogs, finding it necessary to stand over the latter with a whip to keep them from stealing from each other. As these dogs of the North land get but one meal a day, or in twenty-four hours, they seemed to

be impressed with the importance of making that a feast.

"It was a late hour when we went to bed, with caps, coats, and mittens all on, and many blankets over us. Then our care was to lie perfectly still, as every move would let in the cold. The fire inside the camp was a large one, and the side of the sleeper turned toward it was almost roasted, while the side turned away from it was as near being frozen, the cold was so intense.

"Despite the hardships, however, Peter Paul," said the Englishman, "the winter travelling had its compensations. I saw, for the first time, in all its glory, the aurora borealis, that strange, inexplicable, many-coloured radiance, enveloping forest, ice, and snow with heavenly glory. I wonder not," he added, "that the Indians call those halos of light 'the spirits of the departed.'

"Then the great moose, in little social groups, frequently outlined their ungainly bodies against the white background, the caribou sped in herds across the trackless waste, and white partridges rose in flocks of hundreds.

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"It was one night after we had encamped, when I was feeling very much depressed about my lack of success in my real mission to the North-West, that I told East Wind the secret of my life," said the Englishman, after he had been silent for some seconds. "And I will tell *you*, Mrs. Thornton, and even Peter Paul is old enough now to be taken into my confidence."

Mother glanced quickly at the Englishman, then dropped her eyes; while I clutched both sides of my chair with my hands, as if to hold myself down. The secret of the Englishman's life! That was what the whole Peninsula had been wondering about ever since we had come among them!

"I said to East Wind," he continued, "this is a marvellous tract of the country, and it is well worth a man taking the journey simply to have a look at it. The time is coming, I verily believe, when in thousands the people are coming to work these farms on the great prairie already cleared, and to make use of those wonderful water powers now unused and spending their strength simply for our admiration. But it is not to see the

country I have come, East Wind, but to see the people. I have come on this arduous journey to meet the people of this strange, lone land; I travel all these thousands of miles in quest of *one* human being. I am searching for a friend—one who may have come out here, like myself, to look at the people, to study conditions of their lives, and happily may be found around some of the great trading posts of the fur companies. If you should see, East Wind, among the multitude of people anywhere, a Scotswoman, Margaret Cameron by name, a foreign air about her withal, lithe, graceful, of brunette complexion, call my attention to her without fail."

The Englishman paused and wiped some drops of perspiration from his brow.

"Margaret Cameron, for whom I am searching, is my affianced wife, Mrs. Thornton," he proceeded. "Her father, Donald Cameron, was one of those adventurers who traded in the Hudson Bay Territory. For achievements in that land he was raised to the peerage on his return to England. While in the wilds of the new country, in his youth,

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he married an Indian woman. On the death of the latter, which occurred two years after his marriage, Donald Cameron carried his daughter — the little Margaret — back to England with him, where, owing to his position she had the title of the 'Honourable Margaret.' Very early in her life her father died, and in his will my uncle, Lord Grey, who had been Donald's companion in the Hudson Bay Territory, was appointed her guardian. Every advantage that wealth could command fell to the lot of the little Margaret. Sent abroad while yet a child, and educated in the best schools of Europe, she was seldom in the home of her guardian until school-days were over. She and I had played together in childhood; our homes were side by side, and when she returned to my uncle's house, at the close of school days, she became my affianced wife. But on the very night of our betrothal, some jealous, malicious person told her about her Indian blood, of which she had before been ignorant, and falsely gave her to understand that if I were acquainted with the fact it would mean broken vows. She, dear girl, was very young, impulsive,

hot-hearted, and as she was given to understand that by marrying me she would hurt my prospects, she fled to London early the following morning, before she had seen me, and before the house was astir, boarded a ship bound for Canada, and was far out at sea before I had learned of her flight.

"I followed in the next ship, and have been looking for her through Canada ever since. I have but one thought to comfort me. She was of age, and in command of her father's ample fortune; she can want for nothing that this pioneer land can provide."

Mother wiped tears from her eyes, and after a length of silence the Englishman continued:

"East Wind was much interested, especially in the part of the story relating to Margaret's Indian ancestry. He was silent for a length of time, then he said:

"'Me find dat one woman; she back, back!' pointing with his extended arm toward this locality. 'Me see her among Injuns cholera time. She doctor Injuns, an' make 'em well. Injuns like dat one woman.'

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“ ‘Find her for me, East Wind,’ I implored.

“ ‘Me will, me will,’ he returned. ‘Let me start home to-morrow.’

“So we started for home the next morning, and I am here. But East Wind separated from me as soon as we reached a locality where I could travel alone. ‘Me go find dat one woman,’ he said, and disappeared among the trees out of my sight.

By this time I was standing to my feet, and when the Englishman had ceased speaking, I cried: “I saw her! I saw her three times—at the Governor’s dinner, at the lacrosse match, among the Indians during cholera time!”

“Oh, Peter Paul!” exclaimed my mother, and that was all she seemed able to say.

“Mother,” I cried, “don’t you remember the Honourable Margaret at the Governor’s dinner? You were introduced to her——”

“Why, yes, yes, yes!” exclaimed mother. “You’ll find her, Mr. Grey. I remember very well now seeing her.”

The Englishman turned to me and began plying me with questions. I told him in

detail all my various experiences in meeting the strange lady.

"Oh, why, Peter Paul, did you not tell me all this long ago?" he demanded.

"I promised the lady not to tell," was all the explanation I gave, and he reproached me no further.

Before we had resumed conversation, we heard steps at the door, and father opened it and walked into the house.

He was very much pleased to see the Englishman again, and insisted that he remain the night with us.

"Your house will be damp this first night, after being closed up for so long; remain here," he said, "and allow it time to air."

The Englishman accepted the invitation, and shortly afterwards we all retired to sleep, father being too weary to listen to any of the Englishman's stories that evening.

CHAPTER XXI

THE CONCLUSION

SOME weeks later we were seated around our evening fire, the Englishman again being our guest, when our wooden latch was lifted, and in walked East Wind. There was radiance in his face, the reflection of some great inward emotion, and on seeing the Englishman he said:

"Me find one woman."

The Englishman stood to his feet, and said, "Where, where, East Wind?"

"Long way from here," returned the Indian. "Down, way down river, in Old Keebec."

"Down in Quebec," said mother.

"Are you sure, *sure*, East Wind?" inquired the Englishman.

"Big sure," said the Indian.

"Quebec! It is impossible!" said the Englishman. "I have looked for her there many times!"

"She run away when you come," replied

East Wind. "Injuns tell her when you come. She travel 'round a lot. She not want to be found. She ask Injuns not to tell."

The Englishman seemed too overpowered to ask any more questions, and mother began.

"Is she living in Quebec, East Wind? What is she doing there? Are you sure that it is Margaret Cameron whom you have found?"

"Big sure," reiterated the Indian. "Me see her one, two, three tahms. Me ask peoples her name. Me pertend want to see Injun child, an' go to her school, see her teach. She teach leettle Injun children."

The Englishman uttered not another word, but immediately began to prepare to go with East Wind. In silence, which was very impressive, he shook hands with father, mother, and me, and walked out into the night with the Indian.

We learned later the two men lodged for the night at the home of the Englishman, and started at the first break of day on their long journey to the old city of Quebec.

With the guidance of East Wind the

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Englishman found the object of his long search. What transpired to change the lady's mind, what persuasive powers Godfrey Grey exerted to influence Margaret Cameron to yield to his wishes, we shall never know. But East Wind told us that half an hour after he and the Englishman had reached the school-house the children were dismissed, and he was called in to be introduced to the beautiful pale lady, with wonderful midnight eyes and hair. And that a few hours later he was invited, along with the wife of the officiating clergyman, to witness the quiet wedding of Godfrey Grey and Margaret Cameron in a small Anglican church in the heart of the ancient city.

The Englishman brought his wife to his little cabin home on the Niagara Peninsula, and we hoped that we were going to have them remain with us. Very soon, however, we learned to the contrary.

For some years the Englishman had taken pleasure in superintending my education. He had persuaded me to go over to his place on certain evenings every week to read Latin and Greek with him.

"I want to make sure that 'the land of little less else than trees' cannot make you a stupid person," he said playfully to me, as I had told him years before about the fears my grandmother had expressed in her letter.

To my mother he said, "I am preparing the lad for Oxford. I want to have him ready by the time I return so he can accompany me. I have had the boy so long under my supervision, I must see him to a finish."

"*By the time he returns,*" said my mother afterwards; "I wonder when that time will come."

Before his two years' absence he had marked out for me a course of study, and so desirous was I to win his praise that I carefully followed his instructions.

One evening he invited me to go early to his place and take tea with him. His wife and my mother had gone together to Niagara to spend the day, and did not expect to be home until late that night.

He had over the fireplace, hanging on a crane, a pot containing a savoury stew of venison. While the stew was simmering he

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brought out a large loaf of wheat bread, a great pat of yellow butter, a pound of cheese, and a bowl of stewed wild red plums, placing them on the table of pine which stood in the middle of his one large room. Just before dishing the venison stew, he put the spearmint tea to infuse.

"I cannot see why the people have to be runnin' after the Chinaman for his tea when the woods are full of such as this," 'Lizabeth Hannah had said one day in my hearing, when she was enjoying a brew of spearmint in my mother's kitchen, and I think most of us in the backwoods agreed with her.

When our tea was over the Englishman told me, as we sat around his fireplace facing the blazing fagots, that he had received a letter calling him back to England. "I have been putting it off for years," he confided to me, "but now I must go; and I intend to take you with me, Peter Paul," he added, "and place you in a preparatory school for Oxford, where I shall watch your course as I have watched it here. I must speak to your parents about the question at once."

The secret was soon out, the Englishman could disguise himself no longer ; the intelligence spread fast throughout the neighbourhood and the Peninsula that he had fallen heir to a title and an estate in Old England, and was called home immediately to assume his responsibilities.

He talked my father and mother into willingness to allow me to go with him, and getting me ready occupied their time and attention for some weeks.

It was on a beautiful autumn day that my father and mother, Ishbel, and many old friends stood on the shores of Lake Ontario when the packet came up which was to bear us away, the Englishman, his wife, and me, to the port where we were to take the sea-vessel.

Mother, I could see, swallowed tears while she smiled and kissed me good-bye.

" I have the two hundred acres more than three quarters cleared, Peter Paul," said my father, bidding me farewell. " All the trees which are not left for a purpose shall be down by the time you are through college."

" Perhaps you will like it so well in

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England," whispered Ishbel—so low that no one else could hear her shy, trembling tones—as I shook her hand, "you will never come back to us, Peter Paul."

"Oh, yes," I whispered in return, my lips very near her ear, "I'll be sure to come back. I never could stay away always, *always* from you, Ishbel, *never*."

* * * * *

On seven-league boots the years have fled, and with pen over my ear and glasses in my hand, a hoary-headed grandfather, I sit in my arm-chair lost in retrospect. Beside me, in white lace cap and spectacles, sits Ishbel in her rocking-chair, the playmate of my early years and solace of my later. We have always made our home on the Peninsula, never leaving it for any length of time except on the two occasions we went across the ocean to visit Lord and Lady Grey. Many, many changes have occurred, and I frequently sit and ruminate over what finally became of Joe Town, Long Tom, and others who left the settlement to seek their fortunes elsewhere. What was once the little graveyard in the woods is now swollen to an overcrowded

cemetery ; and those who trod earth's path by our side in our early years have gone on to activities in another world. Of the great forest trees only a few grand specimens remain on our front lawn ; and the stump fences have been replaced by those of wire and iron.

I have just read my story of "Candlelight Days" to my wife, Ishbel ; and, rising from our respective seats, we join hands and bow to the boys and girls, the men and women who, in the years to come, may read the chronicles of our early struggles and triumphs.

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